

LAWRENCE WEINER

**SKIMMING THE WATER
(MÉNAGE À QUATRE)**

Personal Structures Art Projects # 01

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SKIMMING THE WATER [MÉNAGE À QUATRE]

This book is the documentation of *Personal Structures Art Projects # 01*. It has been published as a limited edition. The edition comprises 250 copies of which 50 DeLuxe, numbered from 1 to 50, and 50 DeLuxe hors commerce, numbered from I to L. The 150 Standard copies are numbered from 51 to 200. Each item of this limited edition consists of a book and a CD in a case, housed together in a cassette. The DeLuxe edition is signed by the artist and additionally contains an aluminum stencil.

This limited edition has been divided as follows:

1-50: DeLuxe edition: Luiscius Antiquarian Booksellers, Netherlands

51-200: Standard edition: Luiscius Antiquarian Booksellers, Netherlands

HC I-L: Not for trade

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Text by Lawrence Weiner, Karlyn De Jongh, Sarah Gold & Sophia Thomassen

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LAWRENCE WEINER

SKIMMING THE WATER (MÉNAGE À QUATRE)

**KARLYN DE JONGH
SARAH GOLD**

SKIMMING THE WATER

[MÉNAGE À QUATRE]

Location:

Lawrence Weiner's houseboat *Joma*, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Time:

24 hours, 26 January 2010, 12 am until 27 January 2010, 12 am.

Dramatis Personae:

Lawrence Weiner: *1942, American artist

Karlyn De Jongh: *1980, Dutch curator and author

Sarah Gold: *1978, Dutch curator and author

Sophia Thomassen: *1987, Dutch Art History student

Abstract:

On one of the coldest days in the Netherlands that winter, Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia visit Lawrence on his houseboat *Joma*. The four spend 24 hours together. Lawrence, Karlyn and Sarah have met each other a few times on different occasions; Sophia is new. The 24 hours are set up to be formed into an artist book. Even though the eventual outcome is uncertain, the four players know that the focus will be on Lawrence.



[Photo: Sophia Thomassen, Sarah Gold, Karlyn De Jongh, Lawrence Weiner, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 26 January 2010, 7:25 pm.]

ACT 1: PROLOGUE

Karlyn De Jongh: Today is 26 January 2010, outside it is -11°C [12°F]. I am Karlyn De Jongh and next to me is standing Sarah Gold. We are on the platform of the Amsterdam Central Station. Today we will go to Lawrence Weiner, to his houseboat *Joma*. It is 10:58 am and in one hour and two minutes we are expected on the *Joma*. From 12 o'clock onwards, we will spend 24 hours with Lawrence. We have no clue about what is going to happen, but we are very much looking forward to it. First, we are going to the Starbucks that is here at the train station. There we will meet Sophia Thomassen, who will join us today for these 24 hours.

[Karlyn and Sarah walk away from the platform and start searching for Starbucks. Sarah orders drinks while Karlyn arranges a table to sit down. Then Sophia comes in. The three talk in Dutch about what is about to happen. Karlyn keeps an eye on the clock. When it is 11:35 am, the three decide to go. They make a quick stop at a bakery on the station to buy a snack. While eating, they leave the station and walk in the direction of the *Joma*.]

KDJ: 11:45 am. We still have 15 minutes before our 24 hours will start. Sophia, Sarah and I, Karlyn, are now in the harbor of Amsterdam. We just had a tea and coffee at Starbucks, and are on our way to Lawrence now. We are still looking forward to it, although it is very, very cold. Fortunately, we are not frozen yet. We brought two sleeping bags, even though we are three people, and we have a suitcase full of books in the hope Lawrence will sign some.

[Karlyn switches off the microphone again. The three continue their walk to Lawrence's boat. A few minutes later, Karlyn switches the microphone on again:]

KDJ: It is 11.56 am and we are at Westerdokplein. We are nearly frozen, but we are close by and we are hoping for a warm boat. Our 24 hours will start in just a few minutes.

[Sarah, Sophia and Karlyn carefully continue their route: the pavement is covered with ice.]

KDJ: We are almost at the corner of Westerdok, where Lawrence lives.

[The three turn the corner.]

KDJ: We will probably see the boat of Lawrence soon. The last time I visited him here, Lawrence was already standing outside and waving at me, but this time it is cold. We are at boat number three now, so we have still a few numbers to go. We're counting. And it's really cold...

[They continue their journey, making jokes in Dutch about the cold.]

KDJ: We are nearly there: now we can already see his boat. We have two minutes to go: it is 11.58 am.

Sarah Gold: All the boats are frozen, surrounded by ice, you cannot see any water.

KDJ: There is even some snow. I hope that tonight will be warm.

SG: I hope that his heating works. It is very nice here, but...

KDJ: Yes, it is quite beautiful, and it is actually quite sunny. But with this -11°C, we don't feel so warm. We are really very close, just a few more boats, and...

[Then Karlyn sees the *Joma*.]

KDJ: Ah, here it is! Lawrence is probably inside.

[There is a little step for entering the dock. It is slippery and carefully the three women make their way to the boat. They walk to the door.]

KDJ: Let's hope Lawrence is at home.

SG: It is 12 o'clock now.

KDJ: Yes, it is 12 o'clock. I'll knock on the door.

[Karlyn knocks on the door.]

KDJ: Let's hope he is at home. It's really cold... There are icicles hanging from the boat. The water in the harbor is frozen.

[No sound of Lawrence.]

KDJ: Maybe he didn't hear my knocking. I could not knock so hard because my fingers are frozen.

[Karlyn knocks again. A little bit harder this time.]

SG: We can look if the door is open.

[The sound of footsteps in the boat.]

KDJ: Well, I hear footsteps. There he is, probably.

[The door opens and there stands Lawrence.]

KDJ: Hello!

SG: Good morning!

ACT 2: 24 HOURS

[The boiler makes a zooming sound about every twenty minutes. Lawrence smokes his tobacco slowly and often the cigarette goes out before he finishes it. He then plays with his lighter to light it again.]

Lawrence Weiner: Gekke mensen! Dat moet ik wel zeggen! En talrijke mensen. [Strange people! That I have to say! And many people.]

[Lawrence, Karlyn and Sarah greet each other with kisses and hugs.]

LW: You have picked the strangest day in the world. It's freezing!

Sarah Gold: We noticed.

LW: It's cold on the boat too.

[Sophia and Lawrence greet each other with three kisses.]

LW: Ik ben allochtoon. Ik wil het 1, 2, 3 keer. Echt! [I am an immigrant. I want it 1, 2, 3 times. Really!] Why don't you just put your coats here and we'll do the best we can. Alice [Lawrence's wife] took off and she is staying at another boat, she thinks. If she can get in. No, because it froze.

Karlyn De Jongh: Was it cold last night?

LW: I don't know. I had dinner with Ann Goldstein, so we were on the Utrechtsestraat. It was cold, but we took a taxi home. So, I have no idea how cold it was. It was cold on the boat, yes, but there is nothing you can do about it.

[Sounds of puffing and moaning. The three women are defrosting and taking off their coats.]

LW: We'll do the best we can.

KDJ: Yes, definitely.

LW: It still is low, when we are sitting downstairs. I am trying to clean up the mess from two days ago.

SG: Don't worry about it.

LW: You have no idea. It's very primitive, if you came to New York, you would have been in luxury. Because it's five floors, and there's heat.

[All laughing.]

LW: And big showers and everything else, here there is nothing.

KDJ: But that makes it special.

LW: That's right. But this is it. It's from the 1800s. We have been on it since 1970, but we haven't fixed anything, because the Gemeente Amsterdam [the city] has gotten anal. You can't shit in the water anymore. Which means that we have to move the whole place, which is primitive, to another place inside, so that the shit can go into the *riolering* [sewerage]. The Gemeente put in *rioleringspijpen* [sewerage pipes]. This big...

[Lawrence makes a gesture, bending his fingers into a small circle.]

KDJ: That's not really big.

LW: So, that means we need a shit-eater.

[All laughing.]

KDJ: We had a similar problem in our apartment in Murano, Italy, a few weeks ago.

SG: They have septic tanks, but of course it's Italy-built, so the pipes are like this big...

[Sarah makes a hand gesture.]

SG: One day, I was still on the road, but Karlyn was at home. She called me up and said: "It's flooded!"

LW: And you said: "I told you not to eat so much."

[All laughing.]

LW: And in Italy they will tell you it's your problem. You ate too much.

KDJ: You use toilet paper, you shouldn't do that.

LW: Exactly, you should use newspaper and then later you should burn it. Here the toilet works, more or less...

SG: Nice.

LW: We found out that by more than half of the boats the water is frozen, but we were able to take water from the street into the tanks. So, we have water. I think we have enough oil. We have oil, and we'll manage, okay?

Sophia Thomassen: That sounds perfect.

LW: And then there is an *eetcafé* [diner] across the street if it gets too cold, and we can also go into the city. They let us in: I have a visa.

[The four decide to go downstairs and look at the baggage the women carried with them.]

SG: We look like true city girls, but it's really only books that we have in there.

KDJ: We brought only one toothbrush for the three of us.

[All laughing.]

LW: Well, we have a lot of old toothbrushes, from the time that my daughter stayed on board. We have lots of toothbrushes. But the place, I really and truly warn you: it's funny!

[While Sophia and Karlyn unpack the suitcases, Sarah speaks with Lawrence about subsidy and Dutch mentality. When they collected the necessary things, the four take the narrow wooden stairs down to the main room of the boat. While walking down the stairs, Lawrence says:]

LW: This is the strangest thing...

[The four walk towards the table, which is standing on the left side of the ship. At this table they will sit most of the time for the next 24 hours. Karlyn installs the computer and the microphones for taping the sound. Lawrence continues talking:]

LW: It's strange, you're in a war and you are *vluchtelingen* [refugees]. You are! And will make the best of it. There is a television too and there is some sort of music.

SG: The boat is okay to leave it alone when you're not here?

LW: It used to be all boats tied together. It was like Shanghai. And everybody sort of functioned. We are sort of the oldest people here. We are friendly with the neighbors. The last 8 to 10 months, because of all the projects, we haven't been here. We don't have WiFi, so I don't know how to communicate with the world. Alice goes out with her computer and stands underneath buildings, but now it's a little bit cold.

[While the three women prepare their things, Lawrence tries to make it a little bit nicer.]

LW: We haven't had the chance to do any cleaning up. The other night was so terrible. We actually ate quite well. We said: "Oh we have some pasta." But it was Dutch pasta. It was the Italian stuff that they sell in the supermarket. I'm so glad I had dinner last night. Okay, so here we are, and you will figure it out, I'm in your hands. I work for you now.

SG: Thank you.

[Lawrence grabs his tobacco and starts rolling a cigarette.]

LW: We have enough water, but be careful when you flush the toilet, that uses up too much water. So, let it sit.

[Lawrence shows Sarah, Sophia and Karlyn the boat.]

LW: Okay, there's the garbage, I don't know what else to say.

KDJ: Lawrence, if it's okay with you....

LW: Everything is okay.

KDJ: We'll record the whole 24 hours. If you disagree with anything...

LW: Oh, yeah...

[And Lawrence makes a gesture with his hand.]

KDJ: We're going to make you promise to be very honest with us. Very honest.

LW: Do I have to promise?

KDJ: We want to make a handshake.

LW: That's so funny. Okay, so we'll start it all off when you are set up. The thing that is the most important, and people have been driving me crazy about why are you doing this, why is this? And I keep saying: "To tell you the God honest truth, the people I work with, I don't really know them." And I don't know anything, genuinely, about anybody. And they keep saying: "But what do you mean?" And that's the whole point.

SG: They don't understand.

LW: They don't get it. Anyway, I make movies. I'm used to working with people. I'm working for people. Are you comfortable?

[The sound of confirmation from three sides.]

LW: It's nice that it's light. Yesterday it was so fucking depressing. You're not on yet, are you?

KDJ: I am, yes.

LW: So, yesterday it was so depressing. In New York it's not so bad, in New York people are much more professional about things. Here it'll get so *burgerlijk* [bourgeois]. Someone sold this nonsense about the *Künstlerfrau* [artist's wife]. It's not about the *kunstenaar* [artist], that doesn't exist, because everybody here is *zelfstandig* [independent]. It's a company business. You don't mind if I work as well, when we are here?

SG: No, no.

KDJ: No, of course not.

LW: I need to have something to do. I can't just sit and smoke cigarettes all day, and I forgot to buy dope. We do have a bottle of liquor. We went out yesterday. It was so dark. But we bought some cheese and things and then I thought we'll figure it all out. It is your problem.

[Lawrence talks about his friend and her Oscar. In the meantime he is walking around in the kitchen.]

LW: I am looking for something. And I hope you don't mind that I smoke? It stinks. Nobody else around me ever smokes except me.

SG: I will take one or two.

LW: We have lots of tobacco.

[Lawrence walks to the table and sits down.]

LW: Now tell me dear, what we are doing here. Because I have no idea.

SG: Well, first we want to thank you.

LW: Don't, at least not yet.

[Sarah starts explaining the project and what is going to happen in the next 24 hours. Lawrence interrupts by making a remark about the books that the three brought with them. The books are lying next to Lawrence on a stool.]

LW: This is not bad.

[Lawrence points to a book of interviews with him.]

SG: It's very nice. But unfortunately I read it in German, so you were speaking German all the time.

LW: Some of them were in German.

SG: Really? They were actually originally German spoken?

LW: *Mein Deutsch ist überhaupt nicht gut, aber es geht. Es ist nicht so flüssend, aber es ist verständlich.* [My German is not good at all, but it is okay. It is not fluent, but it is understandable.]

SG: *Sie sind froh, wenn du Deutsch sprichst.* [They are happy when you speak German.]

LW: *Ja, es ist alles Kneipedeutsch. Wirklich! Die sind so böse über meine Kollegen. Sie sind immer unterwegs.* [Yes, it is all bar German. Really! They are so angry about my colleagues. They are always on the road.] English *is prima voor kunst* [is fine for art]. *Het is veel beter dan andere talen* [It is much better than other languages]. But you get so angry at two o'clock in the morning. You're working with somebody, and they want to talk to you about their insights. Well, they want to talk to you about their kid, they want to talk to you about something besides the *grosse Personen* [famous people], and they can't do it in their own language, because nobody took the trouble to pay attention. German is an easy language, Dutch is easy too. French is complicated, but the French are very nice about it. I prefer speaking French.

SG: *Je ne parle pas français* [I do not speak French].

LW: *J'ai les émissions dans le radio. C'est rien de problème. Un petit peu de hihih... [I have programs on the radio. It is no problem. A little bit hihih...]*

[Lawrence puts his hand in front of his mouth. All laughing.]

LW: No, but this thing about German is fine. Germans are nice people. I'm serious. I wouldn't want to live in Germany, their life-style is so dreadful.

SG: The Germans have made their life too hard.

LW: Here it is okay. It's like going to the country. The boat is like a cabin and you can play it that way. In Germany it's that way all the time, it's cold in the houses and everything is *kinderachtig* [childish], *studentikoos* [studentlike]. I feel so strange. I'm just sitting here.

[Lawrence makes a facial expression. All laughing.]

LW: That is why the Utrecht thing was so weird.

[The Saturday before, Lawrence had an opening of his exhibition at BAK Utrecht, the Netherlands, where he had a public discussion with Ann Goldstein. Sarah and Karlyn went to see this event. They discuss how it was. Thereafter Sarah continues explaining to Lawrence what it is the three women want from him.]

SG: In these 24 hours we want to find out who you are and speak totally honest. That counts for you, but that counts for us as well.

LW: You have to remember that I have a very lucky existence: I never had to be not honest. I don't teach and I am not a national artist. So, pretty much, everything is pretty open and there are no problems. I have a thing as well: when I do business, it's open. I am not quite easy to do business with, but it's all-open and it's all-public. It saves so much trouble later.

SG: But I think not many people have the capability to speak totally honest, and therefore we want to say it out loud. Also because it counts for us as well, learning to be totally honest is not so easy. When I look at you now, it seems you are quite a stable person.

LW: But I'm not.

SG: You are a mature man who...

LW: Thanks a lot. Really, if you would know what state I'm in... I'm not even supposed to be traveling.

SG: No, but it's a mindset. And you know for yourself that you have always done your best to be a good human being, to be the maximum you can be.

[Lawrence now tells a story about how Alice ran off this morning with a bag full of dirty laundry. All are laughing and they start a conversation about how difficult it is to do the laundry when you are traveling and the cultural problems that you come across, when all you want to do is wash your clothes.]

LW: Sometimes, you go out in public and you literally don't want to be you anymore, and then, if you have a beard: it's a disaster! And everything sticks on you.

KDJ: Do you mean that you can smell your own beard?

LW: Yeah, you smell them in your own beard. I am reasonably clean.

[All laughing.]

LW: Even here, where there is just a little water, I did have a shower this morning.

KDJ: Did you brush your teeth?

LW: I did. Alice reminded me.

KDJ: Very good.

[All laughing.]

LW: I'm serious. Her comment was: "You smell like an ashtray."

[Sarah now starts to give Lawrence a little bit of background information on who she is, about how she met Rene Rietmeyer, the initiator of the project *Personal Structures*, about Karlyn and how the two met Sophia.]

LW: This is all new information for me. Because when I tell you what I thought, you're going to laugh.

[Lawrence avoids telling what he thought and starts asking questions. Sarah tells Lawrence about her personal history, about where she grew up, about her parents, and about her connection with Germany. Then they start a conversation about the generation that is now in their 30s, that they spend a lot of time in university. Lawrence explains that in the USA you can do university very fast, that you can have your masters when you are 21. Lawrence remarks that age and experience are not a problem for him.]

LW: I work with people. Sometimes I tell them something and they say: "Lawrence, I wasn't even born then." Sometimes I take for granted that everybody knows everything. But I think you have to worry about this age difference. For real. Sometimes, I will speak about something that nobody knows what it is I'm talking about. My daughter was born in 69 and that's a whole other thing, she went to school in New York. She knows things about me that I have forgotten, which is scary.

[Lawrence returns to the previous conversation topic.]

LW: But I never read the two of you that way. I thought when you first came to visit, I'd liked you obviously, there was a connection. I thought the two of you were together, I thought you were a couple. And I took it for granted that you were, until this very moment. When you meet people, you feel affectionate towards them, you feel open towards them. I really don't know how to explain this. It doesn't have another stage; it has what it has. And I thought the two of you were a couple, until just now, until you walked in here today. You'd make a very nice couple. Very pretty, a very attractive couple.

[Lawrence points to Karlyn.]

LW: When you were here in the summer, I spoke to you in these terms. I was flirting and all of that, but I took it for granted that

the two of you were together. That you were friends. That you were living together and all of that.

KDJ: We are living together.

LW: This to me is a surprise.

[And after a pause:]

LW: But I think you don't have to worry about this age difference. For real.

[Sarah now tells about the three things that are important in their life: working, traveling and sex. Lawrence gets up from his chair and starts walking around to switch on some lights. He also puts up the heating. The stove is one of these old stoves that were in police boats. He walks back into the direction of the table.]

LW: This is so funny. It really and truly is. Silly me.

KDJ: I think, it's not so silly. Many people seem to have this reaction when they see us together, but usually they disguise it in the question: "Are you sisters?"

SG: They wouldn't dare to say: "Are you lovers?"

LW: Why not?

SG: It is because most people are not so strong to ask such a question directly.

LW: Well, listen, I thought the two of you were lovers, that didn't stop me from feeling comfortable around you, it doesn't mean anything to me, I'm sorry.

[Lawrence rolls a cigarette.]

LW: I have lived a strange life that way. But my private life, other than when it relates, is not going to be discussed. I have been a lucky person and have spent a lot of time around interesting people. When you look into my existence, you don't find many stories. There are very few anecdotes. It always has been what it was and that's the interesting thing. That's also in the art world very rare, everybody talks about everything. They have to know something, but most people don't know. If you do everything open, nobody can figure it out. It's interesting isn't it?

KDJ: Why is it you do not want to discuss your private life?

LW: Because we will be discussing other people.

KDJ: But when it comes up it is alright for you?

LW: My private life: when it comes up, it comes up. But this isn't about being honest or not being honest: there is a private life and there is another private life. And the other private life might be short-term interesting to people, but why involve other people? And why talk about what other people might be thinking?

KDJ: Yes, you cannot look into the brain of another person.

LW: And you cannot look into the situation. You find yourself in situations that you cannot do it. Not because you're doing anything wrong, but because the outside world is making it so difficult for the other person. They cease being a person. They become so-and-so's *stumper* [looser] or so-and-so's *petit ami* [little friend]. That's the end of it and you cannot do it anymore. Meanwhile it's really the problem whether the three people involved... That's usually less problem than you can ever imagine, really and truly and happily we don't go all the way back. There would be total confusion. Total!

[Sarah wants to continue her story.]

LW: Now you have to completely reorganize!

[All but Sarah are laughing.]

LW: I'm going to be a pain in the ass for the rest of the time.

KDJ: Please do so! But I'm going to give you a book now.

[Karlyn puts the book *Personal Structures: Time • Space • Existence* in front of Lawrence.]

LW: Nobody has gotten any sleep on this boat. Alice and I have really gotten no sleep.

[Sarah now attempts to explain to Lawrence what the project *Personal Structures* is about while he is flipping through the book.]

LW: Oh God, you work with Joseph. It's strange, because usually I get along pretty well with my colleagues, but he and I don't get along at all, you see.

KDJ: Why is that? It seems you used to be good friends.

LW: I knew him very well. I was the person who introduced him to Seth Siegelaub. I liked him when I met him. We got along very well and I introduced him to people and he introduced me to people. And we showed together and then something started to go wrong politically. And in my eyes, he became a kind of academic Stalinist. But there even were some personal problems, but nothing really anecdotal. And it ended up that he was saying he was no longer part of my world. He was there: he was showing with me, but I just didn't have anything there... and it was difficult all the time, like when we did *THE XEROX BOOK*. Seth Siegelaub had to get a car and move everybody around. And Sol would object Joseph into his studio, so I had to go up and down to talk about the book. He had

a problem, and they had a problem and by the time we were all finished and when he turned to me, I decided "This is fine", I don't want to put up with this anymore. But he was a very good artist in the 60s. Something went wrong somewhere. It happens to people. He left and he left behind this work that was good. I don't know why we don't get along, but I try to be very polite.

[Lawrence tells about meeting Joseph recently, when he was on a panel discussion with John Baldessari in Austria. He also speaks about Joseph's girlfriends.]

SG: Might it be that he is disappointed?

LW: He seems to live a very good life. He makes his work, and like I said, he is a very good artist; he's not a dope. He's an intelligent guy. He's very charming. But that's the one person I can't talk to you about, because in fact I haven't had a conversation with him in 30 years. But he seems obsessed with me and I don't get it. It might be my star is fading, there is a good chance that he will lose it and remind people that I existed.

SG: To your advantage!

LW: Look, an artist is a public person. And sometimes you psychologically or physically just can't do the other part of it or it just doesn't work. It's strange when a person is reminding you that you're horrible. Because people in the audience couldn't care less.

SG: Kosuth said that he had to admit, that you are the better human.

KDJ: He is the better artist, but you are the better human, he said.

LW: Fuck him! Why am I a better human? How did that happen? You have to talk to people who live around me: I am not so nice. I don't even know if Alice is talking to me this week. I'm serious!

SG: As far as we've experienced you, you are the live and let live type.

LW: That, but it's a political thing. I come from the working class. I came through the real civil rights movement, the real labor movement. It's not about live and let live; there is no art world unless there is someone who is here and here and here. That's a big thing. And there's one very important thing where Joseph and I never agree upon: I don't think there is something called a bad artist. There is a lot of bad art. And everybody doesn't have a strategy. There is an awful lot of artists who want to be and that's the kind of energy that's very positive in society. And it's that simple. And if it's not racist, sexist or fascist: leave it alone. Make a joke, but leave it alone. Some people see the Academy as important. The Academy is hearts and minds, but students don't count. They are not supposed to be responsible for everything. That's the new thing about graduating from art school and having your portfolio ready for the next 10 years. They are going to freeze that way and that's what's happening to them. They get their three years of good success and then for some strange reason they disappear. Look at *Op Losse Schroeven* or look at the *Attitudes Become Form* catalogue. Go through it. Half of the people, you don't know who they are.

KDJ: Why do you think that is? Why do you think these people disappeared? And why do you think you yourself survived?

LW: I don't know. It's something that I find an interesting question. And it is not a rhetorical question: I don't have an answer. You're on the road a lot and so am I. When I go to a club, I listen to the same kind of music as when I was in high school. I graduated from high school in 1958. So, 1954 I was in high school. That was a revolution; that was the end of populist music. It was the beginning of rock 'n roll. Why are we still dancing to the same beat? Punk did not change it. Metal is still rock 'n roll. You go through the whole thing.

Why are we still having the same conversation about what constitutes art as we were all having in the 60s? 60s. Because remember, when they are talking about the 60s, they are talking about the 70s.

[Lawrence pauses.]

LW: I'm living this life... I am not a human being; I am a kind of object. Somebody said: "I was talking to my mother the other day". And she said: "You don't get it: you are talking about the revolution in the 60s", take a look at an art book from the 60s: everybody was wearing a tie. And that's the key. It maybe takes somebody from outside to notice it. The people who were destroying the world as it existed, were all wearing ties and suit jackets. So was I. I think.

SG: But that was the visual appearance, it was about the mindset.

LW: No, I don't know what it was. I was a very lucky person, because I grew up in New York. And by chance, because of my existence, I fell in with these people who were totally much older than me. Alice and I met the chief of the drawing Center and he said: "I know Lawrence since he was 14." Because I used to go to the bars at night: I was tall and could get away with it and there used to be a different Law in New York. It was 18 to drink, not 21. 21 is for all the children in the provinces, for when they are driving. That's the reason why they changed it. And it closed off a lot of things. I was able to go to a bar, when I wanted to talk to Franz Kline. The worst thing that could happen was that they would push you out of the way. Which they usually did. But they were usually very nice to me. I am only here because of the kindness of strangers. So when you ask about the human being and the openness and all that, one has to always remember that you are only existing because of somebody who had no reason whatsoever to be nice to you. You were not even of the same sexual persuasion. He's a good-looking kid; he's a hetero-

sexual kid. Jack Kerouac for example, and other people, were all like: "Hey, he's straight." Weird but straight. It's the kindness of strangers.

KDJ: You yourself are always kind to strangers as well, aren't you?

LW: If they are not offensive, yes. If they are offensive, I can really be rather brutal and also physically violent (although not any longer). That's really weird, getting to be 68 and your body is beginning to fall apart.

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about a certain situation with the curator who was defending another artist.]

LW: I have never killed anybody. With all the violence. And all the work I've done as a bodyguard, for labor leaders and things like that, I have never in my life shot somebody or killed anybody. I have never stabbed anybody either. Luck. "Hey, hey, calm down" worked. When you ask about that, it really has a lot to do with chance. And you have to accept that. It has nothing to do with the work that I'm doing. Although I would really like to destroy this art world, the way it is. I think it's not good for people. It has come as a reflection of things and why would you reflect on something that you are trying to change? We tried to show that we are *stevige mensen* [strong people] and that is not the point. It really isn't. But that really bothers me, because I'm the better artist.

KDJ: Why do you think you are the better artist?

LW: Because the work that I'm doing does not rely on any kind of an acceptance of history: you can use it, you can know it, you can play with it, but it doesn't use any kind of a background. It doesn't do this other thing... the saddest thing that ever happened to me, was getting to Japan and I was working in Japan and for some strange reason. I don't make any money in Japan, but somehow I am a San. At that

moment, those records I made with Ned Sublette were all over the place: the clubs you went to, they already had a dance and they had it in jungle and they had it in this. I was walking around with Katharina Sieverding and Marina Abramović and we could get into any place. The great day came: I was introduced to the Japanese De Kooning.

[Lawrence now tells a story about both De Kooning and the Japanese De Kooning.]

LW: I just stood there and I thought: "Okay kid, get your ass straight, stop the Zen crap." And I was lucky, because I knew De Kooning. And he was always sort of supportive, that whole group, also Newman. They were very supportive, I don't know why. Also Chamberlain, he said: "Hey kid, they'll say you're crazy. You're not crazy, but how the fuck are you going to make a living?" That was their concern. It was not about a fear that what you are saying was going to disrupt their place in the world. Because everybody wants their place in the world. But it genuinely was about how I was going to make a living.

KDJ: You once mentioned that De Kooning was important to you. Was it because he asked you that type of questions that he was important to you?

LW: These are the people who accomplished something. They did something very special. In fact it's De Kooning now, because he chose that. That's the funny thing: It's not Van Gogh, but it's De Kooning. He left here. And okay, he's not that radical an artist, but he did understand that he was having a conversation with his times. And people who have conversations with their times are better artists than artists who have conversations with dead people. It's that simple and that's the difference we are talking about. A lot of artists base themselves on something else.

SG: But you can take the knowledge and take it from there and develop your own ideas and thoughts from the history you learned.

LW: You can.

ST: You also do that unconsciously, right?

LW: No, you can do it consciously. You yourself can sometimes say: "So and so, eat your heart out!" It's like the radio program I'm desperately trying to do in France. It's called: *AND THAT WAS THE TROUBLE WITH ARISTOTLE*. You can look at this and say: "Aristotle, eat your fucking heart out!" because with the event of quantum mechanics... And quantum for me has been, since I was a high school student, a real break: there is no mathematics. Because nobody quite knows what it is. It's like electricity. Electricity: nobody knows how it works.

KDJ: You just use it and put the plug in.

LW: Still, until this day nobody knows how it works while the whole world is based on electricity. And there is nobody that can tell you how it works.

KDJ: I think we should get back to...

[Karlyn points at the paper with notes that's lying in front of Sarah.]

SG: Yes, I think we should get back to the first line.

LW: We have a lot of time. And I don't know how we're going to do with food and all that stuff.

KDJ: We'll see.

LW: Really and truly, there only was time to get a little bit of cheese. That's it. And there is some old bread, and there is a chicken part. We can make chicken soup. I'm serious. I didn't prepare for this.

[Lawrence now tells about the situation they were in before the three women came to the boat. Alice actually wanted to go to Istanbul, but that it was impossible because she had too much to do and because the city was frozen.]

LW: Usually it's so warm in here. You can literally leave the doors open. If the *kachel* [stove] works. It's an old police *kachel*, from the *waterpolitie* [water patrol]. It's from a police boat.

KDJ: Do you still cook on it sometimes?

LW: We have, when we didn't have any gas. I couldn't figure out how to get a tank of gas. You're totally dependent here, but it's changing. We didn't have electricity here for over 18 years. We raised Kirsten [Lawrence's daughter] on this boat. With the baby, nine months old, with *luiers* [diapers], because we couldn't even afford throwaways. With no running water, and practically no heat, and no electricity.

[Lawrence tells several stories about Kirsten and how she grew up on the boat and about living in Berlin for a while.]

SG: How long have you lived in Berlin?

LW: Oh, I have a problem: I can't live away from water very long. I was in New York every three weeks for something. The tickets cost nothing. It was a time of real terrorism. You would get on planes and they were empty. You could get a ticket for \$75. It was a different time, but I could go back and forth a lot, and I don't like Berlin.

SG: Why not?

LW: Then it was because it was just a hooker city. There were some bars, and there were nice people. But it just didn't interest me; it wasn't my life. Now, I have been working a lot in Berlin, because I

have been doing the Hamburger Bahnhof and I did the Deutsche Guggenheim and other things. But it's not a real place: because nobody can earn a living there, and I don't like to spend my whole life around bourgeois people. Because you hang around with people who bring in money from the Danish government or from this place or from that place or they are bringing in the money from somewhere else. But the nice thing about Berlin is that it has big places. Alice loves Berlin. She thinks it's gorgeous. So, it's just my personal thing. I don't like to be around people who don't let other people in. I am from the art world that wouldn't have existed if people didn't work: I worked at the docks, somebody else as a taxi driver. Everybody did what they could to pay their bills. You can't do that in Berlin. Nobody can work 'black' any longer. All you have is the same class of people who already showed they are not interested in changing the world because they spent six or seven years in art school. They have their MFA and all that. But the lower class remains locked out. Unless they are willing to be exotic. Who wants to be exotic? Very few people; they want to be who they are.

SG: I think that we feel very normal. Also in our behavior and things. But for other people, we are different, strange.

LW: That's different. Do you have any idea what conversations were going on in Utrecht about our project? I was asked to be at Witte De Wit in Rotterdam, today, but I said I can't, I'm doing this project, and they said: "Oh, three women and you in the boat?" And I am thinking: "Hmm." And then somebody I once did a project with says: "Remember when we were with the four of us in the hotel room and we were all sleeping in the same bed?" I said: "Yes, so?" And he says: "You don't get it, the world has changed." And it's not a joke: we are living amongst bourgeois people. They are watching it on television. You think we are exotic? Didn't you know we were

having this big orgy right now? That's what we're having. I am serious about it, by the way, you have no idea how dumb most of the people we live around are. Totally lacking any kind of humor.

[Lawrence continues to speak about BAK in Utrecht.]

LW: I may have to make one phone call to New York while you are here. We have been having some problems. I'm doing drawings via the fax machine now. It's a disaster. After a while you don't know why you have let your life become like this. So maybe this is my turning point today. I'm serious by the way. When you're talking about 'personal structures', because we all have personalities... Go on, please. The first question, we haven't answered yet.

SG: No, I'm still in the phase of showing you the book.

[The four are now looking through the book. Lawrence sees the photograph of Klaus Honnef.]

LW: He's such a sweetheart. I did my first retrospective with him. It was in 1972.

SG: Yes, he told us about it.

LW: We were sleeping on somebody's floor, Alice, Kirsten and I. There was no money for this show and nobody wanted this show, but it was a beautiful show. It was a poster. Can you imagine, in 1972, a man who had a career track willing to take the risk of showing 50 works on a poster? Because that was the museum show. They were very angry at the press conference.

[Lawrence laughs.]

LW: He is also fascinating. He knows every single movie that has ever been made. He's this walking compendium of movies.

SG: We have this soft spot for him.

LW: Would you like some tea? I think, I can find some tea.

[Lawrence gets up from his chair.]

LW: The problem is that over the years I've been coming in and going out. I get locked down sometimes and I don't even get into the city. My idea of the city is the Haarlemmerstraat, and *Big Shoes*, so I can buy some shoes. That's about it. Even now I haven't been able to buy... I came in with very few clothes. I haven't been able to go out and buy a blouse. Nothing.

[Lawrence now walks in the direction of the kitchen. Lawrence is boiling water.]

LW: I haven't had anything to eat today, have you?

SG: We had a little bit.

LW: We had nothing. We both had coffee this morning and then Alice left. When I opened the door, it didn't look very promising. So, continue, we can't just sit there. The book, I'm looking through it, so, it's each person... oh, heavens, you have Jo Baer in there.

KDJ: We have 57 artists in the book.

LW: I don't know how you got that all together.

SG: I remember very well that we were in Vienna, Austria. We are always planning something and then we just do it.

LW: Oh, not in Holland, my dear.

SG: We don't get any funding. The only way we survive is by the sales of Rene Rietmeyer's work. We fund this project by ourselves.

[Sarah continues about finances. Lawrence puts teacups on the table.]

SG: Oh, nice cups!

[Lawrence quickly explains how he got the cups and walks back into the kitchen.]

LW: So, you basically start projects that you can finance. I make movies that way.

[Sarah tells about her experience calling Lawrence for the first time from a phone booth in Vienna for the symposium *TIME* in Amsterdam in 2007.]

LW: I do these things, but that is why I have these physical problems, supposedly. I try to put things together. Like I'm doing Castellon now. It was a big political thing, because I'm making the children's sculpture. I tied it to BAK, so that the two of them could put it together. Because I can't manage without a business-class ticket. It's weird. Anything longer than three or four hours is a disaster. Even to Texas, it just doesn't work anymore.

[All are back at the table and drinking tea. Lawrence is looking through the publication and comments on the artists he sees. After a while, Lawrence gets up to search for his glasses.]

LW: I think, it's getting a little bit warmer in here. You guys have to explore the boat. There is a bedroom here. If anybody wants to take a nap, you can take a nap. The front is too fucking cold, but if you want to go into the front, you can go into the front. We have electric blankets you can plug in, but it is still too cold. It's like an *ijskast* [refrigerator].

[Lawrence gets back to his chair and starts reading some of the text in the book. When he sees the photo of himself sitting in the panel of the Amsterdam symposium, he giggles.]

LW: That's a great photograph! At least it's an interesting looking panel. Oh, I don't want to read this now. I'll read it later.

[Lawrence continues to flip the pages and look at the photographs.]

LW: You are lucky. You managed to get people with real *stevigheid* [substance], at least they are something.

[Lawrence now sees the photo of Karlyn with Richard Tuttle during the symposium *SPACE* in New York.]

LW: Oh, so serious!

SG: She can kill with her eyes.

LW: I know that.

SG: But we are working on making her softer.

[Lawrence imitates Karlyn's face on the photo. Then he continues flipping pages, until he sees the photo of Karlyn with Keith Sonnier. He chuckles and makes faces.]

KDJ: Sorry.

[The tea-water is boiling and Lawrence continues to make tea.]

LW: This is getting funny.

[Lawrence returns from the kitchen with a big, Scandinavian teapot.]

LW: This is an experiment. It's supposed to make the tea even better. We will make fresh tea each time. The problem with the Scandinavian pots is that they make too much.

[Lawrence pours the tea into the cups.]

KDJ: Do you like tea more than coffee?

LW: No, but we are still living off the coffee we carried with us from New York. I'm serious. This coffee is something special. We used to always bring coffee to the Netherlands. Now it's a little bit better here, but it used to be dreadful.

[Lawrence is in the kitchen collecting things to eat.]

LW: You caught me. I thought you might be on time, but I wasn't sure.

KDJ: Well, we said we would be here at 12 o'clock...

SG: It's this northern European thing.

LW: Well, I like it. I am always on time. I even go early to airports and things.

[Sarah joins Lawrence in the kitchen and looks at the food he has found. In a whispering voice, Karlyn and Sophia quickly discuss in Dutch how it's going. Then Karlyn joins the others in the kitchen.]

LW: I feel terrible about there not being a lot of food.

KDJ: Please don't. Last Saturday we asked you if we should bring anything. You said: "No".

LW: Yes well, what should I ask you to bring? A *broodje haring* [herring sandwich]?

[Lawrence sums up all the things that he has: dried pineapple, sheep cheese from Texel, pumpkin seeds, *roggebrood* [rye bread] etc.]

LW: We eat reasonably well.

KDJ: Do you enjoy cooking?

LW: Yes, as a matter of fact. I don't go out. I'm traveling so much that I'm so happy to be in a place where I can cook. I just don't do

it. I don't know what's wrong with me. I don't live a very full life. By the way. It's a joke. I can get you into any place in New York, but I probably haven't been there.

[The four set the table.]

LW: I hate to throw food away. After so many years on the boat, but you always feed the eels. There are fewer and fewer eels in the harbor. Let me put the book aside. Otherwise it's just going to be one anecdote after the other. I love looking at pictures of people. When they asked me to sign the edition at BAK... that was rather odd. I didn't. I signed one for somebody.

[Lawrence walks towards his desk to get something.]

LW: Somebody sent me this.

[Lawrence holds up a photograph of himself signing a hot dog.]

LW: It was the chief curator of Toronto. They had me sign a hot dog. I keep it around to remind me when they say: "Sign it." That I say: "Why?"

KDJ: Well, we have a nice request for you...!

LW: At three o'clock in the morning I am known to say: "Yes dear, I'll marry you." I have my weaknesses as well. So, you just have to wait for the right moment.

[Lawrence is back at the table and we start eating.]

KDJ: Why do you feel it is so strange to sign something?

LW: Well, a book is a book, you finish it, you lend it to somebody, it wanders around. The whole life of a book is to go spreading around. The signed books, I don't know. It's not a big deal.

[Lawrence gets up to get more bread.]

LW: I was hungry. It's better than signing a hot dog.

[Lawrence gets back to the table.]

LW: You'll have to come back after we've been on board for a while. It's very comfortable, and the Haarlemmerstraat is wonderful for food, and there are three markets around here.

[The four continue their lunch and speak about the good quality of the sheep cheese.]

LW: Maybe we should get to your questions. All this small talk is making me nervous. I do like to talk about other people. Luckily, I like most of the people in your book. Keith just did a show in Bonn. I will be exhibiting there too. The whole world is about fund-raising now.

KDJ: Did you ever depend on funding?

LW: In the old days I sometimes went to look for it, but never got it. I never qualified.

KDJ: What do you think they were looking for?

LW: Anybody besides me, I have no idea. I'm very serious: anybody besides me.

I was not part of that world. I was part of the world with artists, but not with those structured people. I seem to survive. I don't know how, but it's going reasonably well until now. It's a long run.

KDJ: Are you still able to sell a lot of work?

SG: It's interesting where you stand, you reflect upon your life today.

LW: It's almost impossible for me to do it. That's why I was thinking to take today, when there would be anything in it for me, to get to that point where you may be able to reflect, without having to sit

quietly with somebody in a bar all night. I don't have a picture of myself that is very clear, I really don't.

KDJ: We were hoping to have some time for that, especially because you said last Saturday at BAK in Utrecht...

LW: Well, this is all part of that. That's the point. That is the thing. There is no genuine... There is no way to do that, an analysis or something like that. I genuinely don't have an idea. I don't know why people came to that talk, I'm not selling anything to them. You know what I mean, I don't really need hearts and minds. I am happy when somebody is excited about what I do. The young people were understanding what the show was about. It was about that the majority of people sees line as language. And they can read it. We were supposed to sit upstairs, but by luck we were downstairs. The drawing, Ann Goldstein and I we're sitting in front, said everything. You have to be interested in things in order for it to tell you. But it's not selling anything; it's not selling a worldview. Sorry, I keep interrupting. I'm as nervous as you are by the way. And I feel bad we didn't set up anything, but it was really impossible.

[Lawrence tells what happened the last few days.]

SG: I think you have given us more than we could've hoped for.

LW: Okay, you got me in a very vulnerable state.

[Lawrence points to Karlyn.]

LW: She likes people to be vulnerable. Because she can practice her...

[Lawrence imitates Karlyn's serious look. All laughing.]

LW: It's true! And it works! It works too! And that's what's so wonderful about it. Can you imagine what would happen if somebody was making that face and it wasn't working? That would be so sad!

[Sarah continues to explain why we asked Lawrence for the project. Karlyn takes over and tells Lawrence what the three women want, showing him her book project *On Kawara: Unanswered Questions*, of which she has brought a sample. She shows the book to Lawrence and also shows him the question he himself contributed. Now Lawrence knows what's going to happen, and the four shake hands on honesty.]

SG: After long consideration, we thought it might be a good idea to call this book *LAWRENCE WEINER: INSIDE OUT. 24 HOURS*.

LW: I liked *MÉNAGE À QUATRE* better.

[In the meantime, Lawrence Weiner is looking at the *On Kawara* book and sees the question by Giuseppe Panza.]

LW: I like this question of Giuseppe. "I'd like to know if my interpretation is correct." He's sweet.

KDJ: You had a very good relationship with Panza, didn't you? He was an important person for you, in your career.

LW: No, he was an important person. There is a difference there. My relationship with Panza is a very nice story in fact. He had bought some works here and there, from Fischer and Seth Siegelaub. He had been interested from the very beginning. I had never met him. And then some time in the early 70s, I was making a book in Torino, Italy. We were staying in some sort of complex with a few other artists. The Sperone gallery had money, but not a lot and there were a lot of artists. And so I was staying in a complex with Pistoletto. I just had a show in Berlin and made some money. I had bought Alice a car, so we had a fast car, an old racing Porsche. Which was funny, living in a place with no electric and then driving a Porsche. Something happened, he called and then somehow we went to

Varese to look at things and talk about installations. I was hesitating because I had my child with me. But he said: "I got five." And so we went and by that time he had already about 12 installations. So it was always the work and the work. And he was the one who was walking around with the paper, so that the installation would be right. But his architect suggested to put it directly on the wall. And I said: "Let him do it." And I found a typeface and thought: "Let's go for it and we will see what it looks like." I saw a photograph. The next show I made was in Milano. We hired the best sign painter we could find and painted it in the gallery. That is why it went up on the wall. Otherwise for me it would still be what it was. It was in books and people were talking about it.

It's funny. Once it went on the wall, I found myself in a situation I didn't want to be in: where you have a moral and political contract, that when you're going to present something, you basically have to make political design choices. That becomes another part of another language. It becomes an inflection, but it's still not the work.

I am still really happy when somebody reads the work in some place and then it exists. And the majority of people who do buy it, and stand it. It's a funny kind of thing. That's the nice thing when you talk about dignity. Nobody spends that kind of money unless they want to be part of it. And they don't want to be part of it, when they don't understand it. So you take it for granted, that once in a while there is somebody who just wants your name. That's very rare with me. Other people say that they are confused about what it is, but they are not confused at all: they have found a way to adapt it into their own comprehension, their place in the world. That is not confusion, because it doesn't agree with an art historian. That's not confusion, because it doesn't agree with this or that. And for me it can't disagree as long as it doesn't go against the nature of the

work. I don't show the work in exhibition, in a museum as long as I don't have the permission of the owner: they own it; they bought it. But I do always keep the right to present it in a book. That means it cannot be in an exhibition if somebody doesn't want it, but it can turn up in a book. That means somebody is talking about it as if it is a reality. In order for somebody to tell somebody that they own something, they have to tell them what it is, if it's mine. And that's all been built into the work, that's part of the framework of the work. Once they tell them what it is, that's the work.

KDJ: What is for you the difference between a book and an exhibition?

LW: A book is something that floats around and doesn't have anything with it. An exhibition is a placement in the world, that's participation in the world. Sometimes I lose track and say "yes" too many times. Each one is important, and that's the problem. There is this problem in the art world about hierarchy, which I don't have because I did not grow up that way. I grew up in a situation that somebody made a show and either everybody went or they didn't go. I am just as likely to miss a show at the Museum of Modern Art from a friend of mine as I am to miss a show at the Lower East Side, just because I didn't feel like going to the Lower East Side. It's that simple. It all takes care of itself. That's also when you talk about morality. The morality is just based in the work. But to give credence of a decent human being, that's really nonsense. Really, I'm not a nice person. I am also not an un-nice person. But it's not because I'm good, there's just nothing in it for me. I don't look for the status a lot of my colleagues are looking for. And they make work that is so useful. It doesn't disappear. The work itself is useful, whether it doesn't work commercially or it does, it's useful. That's all you wanted in your life: A shoemaker makes shoes and wants somebody to wear them. It's nice when it ends up in

the design collection of the Museum of Modern Art, but in fact a shoemaker makes shoes for somebody to wear.

KDJ: What do you think then of the fame that you have gotten? For example, in the Phaidon book it is mentioned that you are one of the Canon.

LW: But did I make the Canon? No. I never met the person who made the Canon. Isn't that nice? It's Jean-Paul Sartre. After all the scandals with the Nobel Prize, he was selling *Humanité* in the streets. This was long before your time, but the punchline is great. His friends came and they said: "You cannot do this, you're such a famous person, you can't be standing here." He said: "Yes, you are right, I am probably France's best littérateur. But until 12 o'clock in the morning, I am working on my Flaubert book. After 12, I am selling this newspaper."

[Footsteps on the deck.]

KDJ: I think we have a visitor.

LW: If it is, it's some sailor from the harbor. I just have to throw them out.

[Lawrence continues his story:]

LW: Isn't it marvelous that the left could attract somebody as marvelous as I am? That's the answer you have to stay with, isn't it? Isn't it marvelous that the left could attract somebody as marvelous as I am?

[And after a short pause:]

LW: If you don't see feet, there is nobody on the deck.

[Lawrence tells about how the harbor used to be and how it is now.]

KDJ: Why is water so important to you?

LW: I have no idea.

KDJ: But you just seem to feel better when you're around water?

LW: I don't know. I don't see doctors a lot and now I am at the age where I'm going to have to. I had a problem when I was a kid, from some demonstrations: one of my lungs doesn't work terribly well. They never took care of it and it's a big problem now. I smoke too much and things like that. There is not enough oxygen when you are inland. I think it's nonsense, but it makes a lot of sense, because when you are in the mountains it is sheer unmitigated hell for me. I can't breathe. I sweat. But I think it's psychological, too. I get along really well in Paris. But when I stay longer than eight or nine days, I find somebody with a really fast car and they have to drive me straight-away to the coast. As long as I am in the harbor, I am okay. Even in Utrecht I am too far away from the water.

I have to give my compliments to the BAK people. It was a lot of work to make it happen. People don't know how simple it is. I mean, they hired a professional vinyl person, who knew nothing about art. Which is what I asked for. The woman became totally enthusiastic. She did the most beautiful job. If it would have been somebody from the art world, there would've been these long conversations. But she got into it. Gorgeous, it was beautifully installed. And in fact that's their politics. And nobody realizes that their politics is: Give people the dignity that they know what they are doing and that they are not stupid. They don't have to walk out liking what they did. But they sure as hell can figure out what it is. It's true, that's what I mean with dignity. That's the basic old-fashioned American socialist concept. You know, you can show a dog where to piss, but leave it to figure out how, by itself. We spend a lot of our time in the art world to tell people how to piss. And the real problem is just 'where'. The public is not stupid, they know what to do with a Mondrian. That doesn't mean they have to like it. Or appreciate it.

The only thing you can ask somebody, is to look at something and try to fit it into their live. You can't ask for more. That's not a big deal, is it? Well, in the art world it is. When you think I've got a different position, it's not that at all. It's just totally, absolutely logical. It really is. That's the way you would like to be treated, when you would be brought into a nuclear power plant. People take it for granted that you will figure out what's happening. You don't have to know everything and you may not even like it. But you can understand it. That's not a big deal, sorry. Honest. Sorry to deflate all of this. We should start all over again and I will tell you what a good person I am. And you can bring the fruit and put it on the floor. It's hard to peel a sultana. We will find you a grape.

[Lawrence now tells a story about a friend of his and about calling people 'Their Holiness' and how he refers to the Queen of Holland as 'Their Majesty']

LW: She is not my Majesty, she is 'their Majesty'. Sorry. I am an object, not a subject. In the European Union, I don't even have to wear a tie for formal occasions, because I'm an object.

SG: You have to wear a tie?

LW: They have a dress code, but not for Republicans. Germans don't have to, Italians don't have to, but Northern Europeans have to. They don't 'have to', they will let them in, but it's disrespectful. They consider that there is somebody within their own *gezin* [family] who is better than they are. It's their choice and I really couldn't care less. The queen of Denmark shows up at my exhibitions, she likes my work. And Dan Graham said: "The Queen of Norway loves my work." I have no idea: I've never met the Queen of Norway. But I will believe him. Why not? He's a good artist. And she is obviously smart enough to balance her checkbook.

[Lawrence now tells an anecdote about how he once made an edition of *MY HOUSE IS YOUR HOUSE-paraplu's* [umbrellas]]

LW: Obviously I do, by the way, to answer your question from before.

KDJ: But you do seem to do a lot of projects for free.

LW: I sell enough to pay my bills, and I built a studio in New York. One cannot speak about being a rejected human being, when neither Alice nor I come from any money. To make a house collapse and then rebuild it in the middle of New York, you cannot really talk about being a victim. So at this point in time, I'm not a victim. But maybe in a year or two I will call you up and say: "Karlyn, can you help me? I am in real trouble."

KDJ: Please, do that. I do not know if I can help you financially, but please call.

LW: You know what I'm talking about, that victimization of artists... When you get something right, what's the big deal of doing...

[Lawrence makes a gesture.]

LW: Maybe I have been doing something right for a while. We will leave it at that.

[After a pause:]

LW: But there is the fear of the next time. I have it after every show, like now with BAK. I am very nervous for the next show, in Lisbon. I cannot get it together. It just doesn't fall into place. You are convinced that you have it right, but can you do it again next time? And then you question: "Why?" For a few more *shekels*. They got Israel right, because of what we did in Jaffa.

[Lawrence tells about his experiences in Jaffa. After that he speaks about the Muslims, he continues speaking about the Muslims in

New York and how it is impossible to get a taxi during praying time. Then he speaks about 9/11 and that he was in Switzerland and how he experienced that moment when the World Trade Center went down. Later on the conversation changes in the direction of how fat people are in Washington DC, about voting and then about Obama.]

KDJ: Do you feel American enough that you vote for the American presidency?

LW: I am an American. And totally American. I'm a New Yorker. They don't let us secede, so as long as they don't secede us, we are part of the United States. New York is a nice place. It's a hard city. But it's special.

[Short conversation about the experiences of tourists with New Yorkers. Lawrence then tells about his own experiences in Mexico City, that the people are very friendly, but that it is a dangerous city.]

LW: So, you like New York. I do too. Very much. I used to like Amsterdam. It used to be a very funny city.

KDJ: Why did you go to Amsterdam?

LW: This is the Spaarndammerbuurt. This whole area used to be so *grappig* [funny]. Very friendly, tough but friendly. We lived in this harbor since 1970. Do you know what boats are like, tied together? I could go away and I didn't have to worry about Alice and Kirsten. There was this thing about these really tough people: They are so tough, they don't have to prove it. It was so safe; men didn't use their masculinity by taking care of the kids. When you work on ships, Dutch sailors in the old days were the best, because they were so sure of themselves. One morning the person, who would draw a knife, just wasn't on the boat any more. I learned this as a kid: No matter how good you are,

you can beat somebody up, but you are going to hurt the next morning. Something is going to reach you. I don't want to hurt the next morning, so I let them call me all the names they want and then just sit there, finish your beer and then just go home. It changed, it's totally bourgeois now. Now it's *Jip & Janneke* time: *Hup, daar is Willem met de waterpomptang... want Willem is niet bang* [Hey, there is William with the pipe wrench, 'cause William is not afraid]. It's a different mentality, but it's *Jip & Janneke*.

[Lawrence now speaks about the old Dutch children's books and television programs like *TiTaTovenaar* and how he used to watch them with Kirsten.]

KDJ: Lawrence, I want to tell you about what we are planning to do.

LW: You are afraid of surprises, aren't you? I told you: I have a bottle of whiskey and I read the Bible, so I know how it all works! Okay?

KDJ: Good!

LW: But you'd better just be very careful because when you leave... It used to be Westerdoksdijk and it was really safe, but now when you leave Westerdok, you can turn into a pillar of salt. Sorry, that was too involved.

KDJ: Well, I am just going to continue.

[And she explains about the statements they would like to have.]

LW: Oh, it's like Rorschach, like a Rorschach test.

SG: Like a short answer.

LW: Oh, you'd better get me in a good mood.

KDJ: We were waiting for the right moment. We'll do it a little bit later.

LW: I am going to make it warmer in here...

[All laughing.]

LW: I am so embarrassed that it is cold for you here.

[The women object and make clear that for them it is not cold.]

LW: I have reached this stage. I have been having these physical problems. I am an open window person. I used to be a very outdoors sort of person. And now, oh God. I am so happy with a hotel that has heat like the French heat, where you have to get the chair to open the French window. Because there is no air, but at least it is warm.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: I open the window every once in a while here, because otherwise you will die because I am smoking so much. If it is bothering you, say something.

SG: I am fine with the smoke.

KDJ: Yes, me too.

LW: Don't be polite. Don't be polite here about anything. If you need the toilet, there is a door there that slides.

ST: Oh, fantastic!

LW: No, because we have to rebuild the toilet there. And we realized that, why would you want to put a door on it? If you are sitting, you are going to put a little wall... If Alice can manage to get the *aannemer* [contractor] here again. I sent everybody away, because I cannot stand this *kinderachtige gepraat* [baby talk], if I hear *doei* [bye] more than three times...

[Lawrence makes a face.]

LW: *Weet je wat?* [You know what?] Get out of my fucking life! I can't stand baby talk. I don't even talk that way to my grandson and he seems to be extremely appreciative.

[Lawrence now speaks about his grandson. After a while the conversation turns towards actors, runway models and the fashion world.]

LW: That's the politics of life. It's a little bit about 'not humorous', but you can take some pride that you are involved in something that is worth doing. Even if it's a small part of the world. This may answer some of your questions, by the way. Some people don't want to enter into the world: Their psyche, their ego can't take it. They prefer the *gezellige leven* [pleasant life], they prefer a Saturday night in the bar and they are writing a new song every time. That's a fulfilled life. You can't always relate it to a pop star and that's a fulfilled life. And they are famous. But it's a smaller circle. But they take it just as seriously. They have the same *angst* [fear] about going out and singing every Saturday night. Once you understand that, you're okay. Some people go on the hot wire with the net, others go on the hot wire without a net. You still have to know to get across the same wire. The skills are there, but maybe the courage isn't there.

KDJ: I believe you just said that you do not live a fulfilled life. What do you for yourself consider to be a fulfilled life?

LW: Me, right at this moment: no. But I'm having my own personal questions about how one must maintain the possibility of doing that. It's a strange thing I have in the studio: Every day I talk to the whole world. How many people can do that? You're talking to Hong Kong, and you are really talking about something. You don't have to know them, but you have a relationship with them and that's a big deal. It genuinely is. You could talk to them and you can say what you want. How to maintain that position, when

the practical part of the world you're living in is slowly, slowly changing, like Holland. Holland faster than most places, because you can see it. Amsterdam was such a fantasy for people. It was never a reality. If you are born and raised in Amsterdam you know fucking well. When your parents sent you to the wrong school, that's the end of your life. It's all about class. It's not about passing tests. I decided to not let these fuckers fuck me over. So it wasn't the fact, Amsterdam was a fantasy. But now the fact of Holland changed so radically. It's the same with fashion.

[Lawrence now speaks about the career perspective of models, the fantasy that Italian people are elegant and Burberry.]

LW: I like fashion, I'm sorry.

KDJ: I noticed. Why do you like it so much?

LW: Because it's an inseparable part of your existence. It's the same as: I'm not a food snob, but if you bother to eat... If you're going to buy two pieces of cheese, bother to buy two pieces of cheese. It's not that hard. Fashion is something else. Fashion is how people in any circumstance can manage. It may not be what you like and it may be a little glitzy, but it's a hell of a lot better than the people who just do what they do. I don't get it. Do you? Truthfully!

KDJ: I like fashion, but many others seem not to care so much about the way they dress, and they often dress very similarly.

LW: Well, if it's a necessity, if it's economical, you don't judge people by that. But this sort of student mentality "I am better than you because I don't look well..."

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about a women in one of his movies who was attacked because she looked all right.]

LW: So, when you ask me why I am interested in people who take fashion things seriously? I think:

[Lawrence whispers:]

LW: "Why not?"

[And then continues in normal voice:]

LW: It's a hell of a lot nicer than waking up every morning as a *Spiegelgeist* [mirror ghost].

[Lawrence now whispers the following:]

LW: The whole world is like: "I am an important person, they will have to put up with me."

[And back in normal voice:]

LW: It's like when you go and give a talk. And somebody is convinced, because they are the odd person out there, you have to be nice to them and you have to go off with them and you have to this and that. You don't have to do anything. All you have to do is be polite. Getting back to the initial conversation: Courtesy is not a big deal. That is why I am able to do things in many places.

[Now follow several anecdotes about extreme political figures and how Lawrence dealt with situations in which he met them.]

LW: You got to give people their dignity. Haider [deceased Austrian right wing politician] hated that piece on the 'Flakturm' in Vienna. But that piece is gonna go now. They are building a snack bar in the 'Haus des Meeres' and there was something else. And there is no way it can function. I never got paid for it. Now they are trying to arrange that it can go on another 'Flakturm'.

SG: I thought they just restored it.

LW: Yes, and it was popular to restore it.

SG: I like very much the translation of the 'Flakturn' in Vienna, because it's not a direct translation, but stays with the feeling.

[Lawrence tries to light his cigarette again.]

LW: They did a very nice translation. And that's the point of the translation, isn't it? It's not *In der Stille der Nacht, das ist ein bisschen gleich mit Tannenbaum und so: Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht* [that is almost the same as Tannenbaum and so: Silent night, holy night]. But *IM FRIEDEN DER NACHT*. The whole thing is really all about and this is very important to me: if you walk at night, especially in Vienna, if you are in the wrong Bezirk, the sounds you hear is broken glass. Bottles smashed down. The same broken glass during the day, doesn't sound the same. Now that to me is the sculpture I am interested in. When something sounds different, it is sculpturally different. It has nothing to do with Kristallnacht; it's just on that building that's offered to me. I didn't ask for it. Kippenberger did the basement and I did the top. That is the other thing: that has been such an advantage, such a thing that you are able to develop. With all these different artists, with different nationalities, different cultures and other things. For some reason they knew. For some reason they audit the same endpoint. But they made it Kristallnacht, but it had nothing to do with Kristallnacht. It had to do with that a broken bottle in the middle of the night really sounds different. While something sounds different, it is sculpturally different.

KDJ: How do you deal with these different interpretations?

LW: There was no interpretation. It is what it says. Each person comes with their own needs, their own desires. Do you think you are interpreting a Mondrian seascape the way he was?

[Sarah and Karlyn answer with a simultaneous: "No, we cannot."]

LW: The reason why I adore Caspar David Friedrich is because it's romantic. But you look at the situation and you put yourself in it. He doesn't tell you anything. And even standing and looking at the broken water, that's the back of somebody. It doesn't even have to face. When you are looking at the light coming up, what's the point in being romantic? That's the thing about the piece I did in Germany, about the water turning from salt into sweet. If that's not sculptural, what is? All you have to do is change the grammatical *geslacht* [gender]. And you change it from sweet to salt.

[Lawrence tells about Caspar David Friedrich and about the period in which he taught in Germany.]

LW: I don't teach for political reasons. Now I just don't have the patience. An artist is not supposed to be authoritarian. You use the word because you have to. You cannot be a good teacher without being an authority. It's your responsibility. It's embarrassing, I still look at students as kids.

[An anecdote follows about Lawrence being higher class as a teacher, because the school office had made a mistake.]

LW: Basically they're my children. It's true, you are responsible for them.

KDJ: Do you feel this responsibility also now, when you are making art? When you are not teaching?

LW: Of course you are responsible. But it is a different kind of responsibility.

KDJ: You do seem to want to change something in a person by presenting your art.

LW: Why would you bother to do it, if you didn't want to have an effect? I'll have some more bread.

[Lawrence gets up from his chair and walks to the kitchen. From the kitchen, he comments on the quality of the *roggebrood* [rye bread] and offers something else to eat. And he speaks about the supermarket at the airport and doing grocery shopping with the taxi. Back at the table it's about taxi drivers in Amsterdam. And then about being able to read Danish newspapers better than Dutch newspapers.]

LW: Look at the place!

[He makes a hand gesture.]

LW: It is filled with dictionaries. I never learned anything in school. There is a word and I have absolutely no idea what it means. And it is a simple word. It's the New York thing: There are a lot of kids who self-educated themselves. Because they had none to talk to and the books were available. But they had no idea how to speak about it.

[A story follows of what determines a bad teacher.]

KDJ: How many languages do you speak?

LW: I don't speak anything. I speak reasonably good American English. I can understand Scottish people and I can understand some others. I don't know why, but I understand English dialects. I only speak American English. And yes *Nederlands* [Dutch]. That's *normaal* [normal], I think: *ik woon hier af en toe* [I sometimes live here]. And French, better than Dutch. From literature and from film and so on.

ST: But that's a more difficult language.

LW: Not for an American. *De Franse mensen zijn er zo lief over.* [The French people are so nice about it.]

[And Lawrence tells an anecdote about his experience with a French television debate. And later he goes into more detail about the debate and how to raise children.]

LW: It's all about fear. Culture is all about fear. You asked me about the fame thing. If you are not going to maintain that little position you have in this world, and be willing to take the responsibility for it, they are quietly closing it off. We learned that as well through rock'n roll and things. You want to make a point, you want to look at David Bowie, David Bowie has got to keep the level or otherwise you're going to be stuck with the Golden Earring. Okay? Or ABBA.

KDJ: Is that why you have a fear for your next exhibition?

LW: No.

[Lawrence puts a piece of bread in his mouth and continues:]

LW: I just don't feel like fucking up. That's the least of my problems. I just don't feel I can do it again. That's the problem, but I think everybody has that problem. Like a chef: You made a good meal, but now you have to make another one and you don't know where the meat comes from. But you've got to eat it. And you don't know what the culture is going to be like if you go into it. You can have known it, but it's going to change.

[He puts another piece in his mouth.]

LW: I feel like we are students in Paris, living from bread and cheese. Would you like a whiskey?

SG: Not yet, thank you.

LW: The store is open until six, so we can get another bottle. Life is not so complicated.

[Lawrence gets up and grasps the whiskey.]

KDJ: We wanted to get through some of our discussion points first, before starting on the whiskey.

[Lawrence sighs while saying:]

LW: I was completely bombed about this thing in Utrecht.

[While eating a bit more, they speak about their experiences in Utrecht, about the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and the show Lawrence declined to do in the 70s. And about firing people.]

KDJ: Are you disappointed by the art world?

[Lawrence rolls another cigarette and says:]

LW: I am extremely disappointed in the art world. It turned into continuation of art school. With the same fights and the same stupid ideas. They complain about not fitting into the system and then they fit in and then they make sure nobody else will fit in. Why didn't they change the system? But I'm also embarrassed by the failure of the opportunity everybody had. When you speak now, let's talk rationality. Why is it that in music, in science and mathematics we are still basically talking about the same problems, while everything else has gone ahead?

[Lawrence finishes rolling his cigarette and licks the ends together.]

KDJ: What is it you would like to talk about?

LW: Don't you think it is really rather strange that we are living in this world where there are people who cannot accept digital morality? And yet they use it to impose reactionary morality. That's the whole Taliban thing.

SG: What is it you actually mean with digital reality?

LW: Think about it: The simultaneous realities within the digital, the thing that makes your cell phone work, that makes your computer work. The computers from nowadays, not the earlier computers, because those were analogue. It's not analogue. Analogue is related to the world we live in. It's anthropomorphic, digital is not. It has been what I have been trying to use most of my adult life. In the simultaneous reality there is no such thing as hierarchy. There can't be a hierarchy, it just can't exist. Now if you build anything that's based on a hierarchy, you are already going backwards. And I don't know why nobody made this leap. There are artists who are able to handle the idea of simultaneous realities; they don't have to be the only ones who are right. I don't mean on a personal level. We tend to personalize things. Don't personalize it. But I mean it politically: I am not a humanist. I will fight for somebody's right to be who they are, but I'm also going to fight the person who forces me to sit through one family evening.

[All laughing.]

LW: Uhuh?

[Lawrence makes a facial expression.]

LW: That's where the whole thing comes in, that's the false populism.

[Lawrence now gives an example about a seminar about anti-racism.]

LW: One of the major points is, you idiots: If you are a racist, you lose all of your rights. Because if you are not a racist, there is nothing wrong with saying: "I don't like Lebanese food."

[Lawrence raises his voice.]

LW: It's that simple! You don't have to make it much more complicated.

[Lawrence now realizes he is raising his voice.]

LW: I feel like I am making a speech. And I don't want to be *burgemeester* [mayor]. I don't want to be in the *Tweede Kamer* [Parliament]. Thank you. And I don't want to be a rector of a university. And that is what they keep offering me. Because they know I will say "no" to being a professor. Rector, not director, because they know damned well I will be hiring people who know how to run things well and that means firing half of the teachers.

[Karlyn and Sarah make a facial expression.]

LW: No, really. "You put your hands on that kid, and you are not willing to stand up and say you are in love with him, you are out!" I have no morals. I really don't care, but if you put your hands on them and you are not willing to stand up and take the responsibility that you did it because you were madly in love, you are fired.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

SG: That is your own moral.

LW: They are not my morals; they are basic, logical morals. *Est une false mesure* [it is a false measurement], but you take responsibility for it. That is why it is easier for people on the left to deal with genuinely right people. Because they believe in what they are doing. And they have a sense of the way to do it. It's very easy to deal with a person who is not a hypocrite. I was trained by Jesuits who really believed. They didn't have to be frightened. Hypocrites have to be frightened that somebody will find out.

[Lawrence tells about pedophilia.]

LW: That's the new fantasy.

[Lawrence tries to light his cigarette again.]

LW: I just don't get it. The *Alice in Wonderland* fantasy. It just doesn't make any sense to me. It's not fair.

KDJ: Do you have any fantasies?

LW: Yes.

KDJ: What are they?

[Lawrence looks at Karlyn and makes a facial expression. Karlyn and Sarah laugh about his reaction.]

LW: I've never been in psychoanalysis, so you are not going to get me!

[And more serious:]

LW: I've had fantasies all my life, haven't you?

KDJ: Sure.

[Lawrence exhales the smoke of his cigarette.]

LW: Maybe later. We have a lot of time. I'm not holding them up. They are not very interesting; they are not interesting at all. And for most of them I have gotten too old for them to be even feasible. I am serious.

KDJ: Have you realized many of your fantasies? Or dreams?

LW: Many desires. I don't dream a lot. I dream that crazy type of person way. I see it as a movie. But I don't believe the dreams as meaning anything. That's why I don't believe in Freud. You can only dream about things that exist, that you know to exist. So in fact, a boy can be a girl, a dog can be a cat, that's all just fine, but that's

not really a dream. A dream is something that doesn't already exist. That's a fantasy, something that you want to feel a certain way, something you want to be a certain way in the world, but it doesn't exist that way, it's not changing it around. A dream is just a dream. You're just putting a face to the picture.

[Lawrence coughs.]

LW: I don't like writing Hebrew all that much. I'm using a formal Arabic and a formal Hebrew letter, rather than a script. A formal Hebrew letter is not interesting to draw. That has nothing to do with the Palestine or Israeli. With the Arabic you can change things and everything counts. Little drips, little dots everything counts and it's just marvelous to draw. And going right to left is not a big problem. It does get your mind working differently.

SG: Did you also draw Kanji's? You did some exhibitions in Tokyo, in the 360° gallery.

LW: I did the *EGGS AND APPLES* book. That's a different typeface. That never existed, that typeface. I drew it. I sat on my knees for 2 1/2 weeks.

[Lawrence sighs as if he is still tired of it.]

SG: We know the kneeling.

LW: They were embarrassed. They were stuck with me. The design was embarrassing, because I didn't get it quite right.

[Lawrence tells about his experiences of his shows in Japan and his *EGGS AND APPLES* book.]

LW: It was in the newspaper but I just missed it. Credit is cheap. And that's the thing about classy people, when you don't have to pay, why not give credit?

[Lawrence continues with examples in which he gives credit to photographers. In the meantime, he lights his cigarette again. While puffing it, he says:]

LW: I don't know what you are doing with all this babble. I know, I am supposed to be giving very important things, but there will be a moment. You know, it's like when you are making a movie...

SG: Cut!

LW: You have everybody together and you let them talk out their characters and their roles and all of that. And at the end of it, you look at them as politely as you possibly can and say: "Magda, it's okay, but today you are not Hungarian."

[Lawrence pretends to be Magda and whispers:]

LW: Oh, okay.

[And continues in regular voice:]

LW: And then we have another take. And it's shot. And it's done. That's fine. Everybody's got to babble a bit. What is it?

[Lawrence turns around.]

LW: I didn't leave my watch on.

[He looks at the clock and shouts:]

LW: Oh my God! We've spent three and a half hours together! And I didn't even figure out as what to feed you. I have no idea what to do.

KDJ: We are alright.

SG: You are feeding us.

LW: There is more here. There are things around. Alice likes to eat. She always buys things at stores. I have this New York problem: I will go without even coffee in the morning, rather than going to a shop and count money. It's about counting. The minute you have to count, you have broken your train of thought. Because I'm using logic when I'm doing my work. It can be about this and that, but there is a mathematical thing in there. If you count, and then you have to speak in syntax that doesn't offend somebody. And you're thinking of in terms of 'yoghurt'. That's as far as you're thinking. You can't look at the person behind the counter and say: "Yoghurt." Especially, if they know you or they know who you are, which is even worse, then they say something and they try to be polite. And then the syntax, the way the sentence is constructed has completely broken my pattern of thinking. That's why I can't bear to have the *aannemer* [contractor] or *loodgieter* [plumber] on board. Everybody in the harbor knows I am locked down today. Because we had to figure out what to do.

[In all glory, Lawrence tells about the conversation he had with Alice about Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia coming to the boat and the possibility of a hotel room.]

KDJ: I like being on the boat.

LW: The boat is nice. Maybe you can look through some things. That will give you more insight.

KDJ: If it is okay with you, I would...

[Lawrence makes a facial expression similar to that of Karlyn and says:]

LW: You would like to continue your questions...

[All laughing.]

SG: I always do with Karlyn...

[Sarah makes a hand gesture.]

SG: Prrrrrrr...

LW: You do?

SG: And also...

[Sarah makes another hand gesture, now less tender.]

SG: Kgggggg...

LW: Oh, I wouldn't do that.

[Lawrence says playfully.]

LW: If I'd do that I would loose control. I have said it out loud. There is something about her demeanor, because I don't really know you. There is something about her demeanor and something about something, that I am a sucker. It's like: I have no chance.

[Lawrence chuckles. Karlyn laughs.]

LW: I am sorry!

[All laughing.]

LW: It's better. It's because you are so good looking. It's better than when it would be out of something else. Like fear!

[Sarah and Sophia are laughing.]

LW: I have no fear. It's okay. Fair enough?

KDJ: Sure.

LW: I want to do the same as you. You want to go on? Yes, let's go on.

[And he adds:]

LW: Whatever you would like, dear.

[All laughing.]

LW: *Wat je wilt.* [Whatever you want.]

KDJ: We thought we could talk about your personal history: From when you were born until the first works on the wall, then we can talk about your work.

[Lawrence sighs.]

LW: The work got interesting long before it went up on the wall. Okay, childhood: There is a problem and it's not a joke, there's a whole block of my childhood that I don't know, that I don't remember. I don't know why.

KDJ: That's strange. From what point do you remember?

LW: I can remember, as much as you can remember as a little child, until my father came back from the Pacific. And there is another point I remember some things. But there's whole blocks that I don't remember, but I don't want to remember. It's not that it was so horrible. I don't think there was a trauma. But I just don't remember. I start remembering from when I was in junior high school, but not terribly much. So that's going to be a problem. But direct questions, sometimes I do remember. But to think about what my life was like, I don't know. My father was in the Pacific. I was born in 42. I remember little bits of difficulties from my mother. But she got by; working class people have a hard time in New York.

KDJ: Your father had a candy store, didn't he?

LW: My father, at that time, was a grocery clerk. He was a manager of a chic shop. I do remember, again, that my father worked

on Madison Ave. We lived in the Bronx. We didn't live in the South Bronx yet. We lived close to it, but not quite. So, it wasn't even a bad neighborhood or something. It was the neighborhood where all the people coming back from the war came together, there were no houses. My mother went through high school and married my father; it was some sort of idealistic thing. They were very poor; it wasn't about money, it was about education.

SG: You know the background of your parents, where they originated?

LW: My mother was born and raised in black Harlem. My father was born and raised in the South Bronx. I'm a real New Yorker.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: They were so upset, because they were nice people. My father really believed in workers' rights. He was a worker, but they got frightened during McCarthy. And they were terrified about the way I was developing. Because, as an adolescent, nothing in the United States was any good. The normal stuff about adolescents. My normal adolescence terrified them. I always thought my father was not fond of me. Later, maybe just five or six years ago, there was a revelation and my father was really rather nice to me considering what the whole situation was. My mother was a real problem, she was pushing him. I don't know whether it's right or wrong, but they are both dead. And they both died young.

KDJ: How young?

LW: 70, 72. My father worked himself to death.

KDJ: Were they young when you were born?

LW: Yes. He came back from the war. He worked on this thing and I guess he had dreams about being somebody else. Then he

found some relatives and bought a little candy store and started it. And that was reasonably successful, considering the South Bronx and everything else. I remember once they were even able to travel, they went to someplace like Florida. And I remember that the candy store went down. He got rid of it and went on to something else. I also remember we went down in a packed car and we were going to move to Florida. He was going to take a job with Swift & Company. It's sort of charming. They got there and they always thought Florida was part of New York.

[Sarah laughs incredulously.]

LW: It's true, they didn't understand. I remember him coming back one day and saying: "It can't work". He had the job, it was a good job he would finally be middle-class. He said: "It's the Jim Crow thing here. I'm not raising my children in Jim Crow."

KDJ: What does 'Jim Crow' mean?

LW: Jim Crow means segregated, Florida is the South. It was segregated and he didn't know. He knew about Alabama and about Tennessee, it just didn't occur to him about Miami Beach. He didn't believe in it, he didn't get it. And they packed up the car; luckily they had kept their apartment and went back to New York. It's very funny.

[Lawrence smiles.]

SG: What a difference that would have made in your life, if you would have grown up in Florida.

[Sounds of cups being moved.]

LW: Not necessarily, yeah maybe. I would have been a different person. I wouldn't have gone back to New York, I was not even

ten. I don't know what it would have done. You never know. So, that's an insight. I didn't come from bad people. But they lived a strange life. And I was in the kind of place where the majority of people were trying to kill you all the time. I was in the wrong class, and wrong this and the wrong that. Public education at the time was a fantasy in New York. It was quite good. They took the kids from the slums and put them in different classes. Instead of three years, you could get through in two years. And you could get through another thing in one year. By the time you're all finished, you had this test for high schools. You didn't have a name on the test. You just took the test. So, you have no idea if it was Rodriguez or this person or that one. Then the guidance counselor came to me and said: "You passed the test, you have a choice." So I was obviously sort of a smart kid. I didn't do a lot of homework. I was in trouble getting busted. But I always fought for the right reasons.

KDJ: What kind of things did you fight for?

LW: Civil rights. I would get underneath trains and go down and do things. I don't like racists, but I don't like ethnic culture. So, I'm in this real paradox. I really don't believe in ethnic culture, I don't believe in family life, I don't believe that any of these things will be good for society. But really, I just don't understand racism. And I didn't understand the South in the United States. I was in the South a lot. And I get along very well in the South: I've got blonde hair and blue eyes. I was the absolute epiphany. Of a Wasp. The right person for their little girl.

[Lawrence in a Southern American accent:]

LW: Do be gentle with her please.

[Then back in normal voice:]

LW: After a skirmish, I could just buy a T-shirt and a pair of jeans and I was James Dean. And they didn't know I was this dirty little New York Jewish kid running around. So, I was quite useful.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: My father had these stores and I started to work with him from when I was nine. They thought it would teach you the value of things. But you're not supposed to be doing certain types of physical things when you are young. It's a farmer's syndrome. That's why farmers look so much older than they are. You only get a certain number of years, unless you are a very special person.

[Lawrence tells a story about the father of a friend in Los Angeles who was very strongly built and lived to be 91 years old. And then in a quiet voice:]

LW: I am not that person and most people aren't.

KDJ: Did I just hear you correctly? Are your parents Jewish?

LW: Yes they are. Not particularly religious or anything, but they were Jewish. Their parents were Jewish.

KDJ: Are you yourself still a religious person?

LW: I wouldn't know. I mean, that's a funny question. I have this conversation with my daughter sometimes. I guess I believe in a godhead of some sort, whether it's the big bang or otherwise, it's still a godhead of some sort, something happens. But, no I am not religious. But I am one of those people in our world that has figured out and studied what the difference is between Jesuits and Catholics, I know my Protestant dogma, I know my Calvin and I know my Koran. I know my Hindu and all of that but I was never much attracted to it, but I know it. Not as well as Marina Abramović does,

but I know it. I am interested in the world. It's the same as literature: I'm not particularly fond of Emily Dickinson, but I've read her. I am one of those kids, who when he was young went to the library and read. That's why I don't understand the art world sometimes, I get confused. It's like I was having relationships with girls named Maureen in the South Bronx and they had six brothers. And we were reasonably sophisticated in those days. But there were implications and I knew the only way to do it, they were leaving me alone because I was a dockworker and there were a lot of Irish kids on the docks. But that wasn't going to last very long. Somebody just got killed or something and they ask me: "Can you fill in on this rugby match?" Irish rugby. And they said: "If you win, there's money on the table." I said: "Sure". And I remember having to figure it all out and I took off a night from work and I went to the public library and I got me a book that told me the rules. I had never even seen a game. And then I was young and very fast, and I looked at all these men, and I was 14 and they were 32. They were this big.

[Lawrence makes a hand gesture.]

LW: There's a problem that when you are very young you can be quite dangerous, because you don't know how strong you are. That's why kids on the streets are so dangerous. But you get hit by a 32-year-old man who drives a truck or loading the docks and you are destroyed.

[Lawrence in a soft voice:]

LW: I got very fast and became a flying wing. It turned out I was good.

[All laughing.]

LW: That lasted until I didn't want to do it anymore. I have no interest in athletics. I only box, because I got in trouble with the cops. And because I have been working all my life as a kid I had a lot of

stamina. So, I could put up a good pretence, but I was never any good at it. I could last three or four rounds.

[Lawrence whispers and adds:]

LW: It hurt like hell the next day.

[Then strong again:]

LW: But I could do it. So, I did. They were happy and I got a little paper.

[Lawrence is reminded of another piece of paper, which he got recently: a fine for *wildplassen* [urinating]]

LW: Then I went on. That's the thing I meant with the religion thing. You have to audit it. You want to learn about the Jesuits? Let the Protestants teach you. Just move it around and ta-da-ta-da-da... You get a pretty good idea, because they have nothing to loose.

[Lawrence now moves and changes his position a little.]

SG: What did you study in high school?

LW: Oh, I had a great time at high school. Absolutely fabulous.

[In the meantime, he is cutting himself a bit of cheese.]

LW: All these poor people got fired from their universities, because of McCarthy. New York was the only city, because of their public schools, which hired them.

[The books are in the way for cutting the cheese. Lawrence gets up to place the books on another table.]

LW: I will look at them all later, when it gets dark in here. We fixed the light last night. At one o'clock this morning, we fixed the light, so that there would be some light here. It was totally *kaput* when we came in here. But we have light now.

[Sarah takes off her shoes and stands up from the table to get her socks. She puts them on.]

SG: I put on my socks.

LW: Yeah, it's cold. I'm so sorry, I really am.

[Lawrence puts something in his mouth and continues talking:]

LW: We put on the oil. I hope there is enough. It's usually very comfortable here.

SG: I like the space. It's very spacious. It's not like these yachts where you have this cramped-boat-feeling.

LW: I know what you mean: when it is a *beetje eng* [little narrow]. *Maar ik werk hier. Als ik werk, moet ik lopen* [But I am working here. When I'm working, I have to walk], so...

KDJ: You have said that you remember things from when your father returned from the Pacific, do you mean the time when he was in the war? When did he come back?

LW: I must've been about two or something. I remember he stayed longer, because I was born with the cord around my neck and they thought I was going to die. He had been in the Navy and they switched him around, because the ship had left and they put him in the Army.

[Meanwhile sounds of knives cutting cheese.]

LW: And then he had a little bit of problems in the service. He was a master sergeant and they tried to get him to officer's training school. But they wanted to be Master Sgt., because that's the highest you can get. I don't remember now what a master sergeant is, but it will come to me. There was a time even that they wanted me to go in the Navy here, in Holland.

[A short silence.]

LW: It was a joke, it was a mistake. Not a mistake, because they thought I was going to stay and I was qualified. I had been a seaman.

[Lawrence pauses.]

LW: You've asked me what my real memories are, what I do remember. But I don't remember what I liked, what anybody else looked like. I do remember it was warm and people were sleeping on the roofs in New York, because there was no ventilation. I remember lying on the roof and the sky was totally black of planes coming. Later on I thought they were coming from the wrong direction. My father wasn't in them, he was coming from the Pacific and these were coming across the Atlantic. All the planes were coming back. Everybody had a father in the plane. That's about it. And I do remember some of my habits come from that time. I happen to have a weakness for whale, for *walvis*, to eat. I have a weakness for the taste. When I'm in Iceland or Norway, my childhood comes back. You had a *hunger-winter* [hunger winter] here after the war. Everything was on ration. New York had the same problem as London. There was no food in New York unless you were rich, unless you were bourgeois. All the food was supposed to go out of the city or to Europe.

[Lawrence explains why.]

LW: The ships took back Guinness, because they needed the weight. They needed the rocks for other things and they had tons of Guinness. My mother didn't drink; all of those mothers didn't drink. They would open the can of Guinness and leave it in the window stand all night for the alcohol to go out. Alcohol doesn't go away. And if you ask me why I drink, that's why. It's all the fault of WWII.

[All laughing.]

LW: And you couldn't get meat or fish, but you could get whale, and cat food. Almost all the endangered species in the world have been killed for cat food. It's sick. And I don't mind cats. It's not the cats' fault. But cats attract the sickest people in the world. They can't see past their cat. Okay, so I grew up eating whale and I liked it.

[Lawrence tells the story of his girlfriend in Canada who was dying.]

LW: I was a romantic young beatnik. I grew up in a neighborhood where at least once a week somebody got shot. It was not a big deal. You hoped it wasn't you, but it wasn't a big deal. I have done the service. And I went to Mexico during the Revolution in 58, 59 as a lieutenant. I watched them shoot everybody down. It was terrible, it really was. But you know: people die.

[Lawrence now tells about how he sometimes eats whale when he is doing projects in countries like Iceland and how the Nazis are responsible for this 'terrible' habit and that the Nazis had to show off their masculinity.]

KDJ: You have something against this masculinity, haven't you?

LW: I do. I have a lot against it. It has fucked up the art world. But remember, what we see as institutionalized feminism, and what we see as hierarchical feminism is just a reflection. It is the other side of the coin, it's Aristotelian. It's the other side of the coin of macho masculinity. When I made my first feature movie, the soundtrack, Landry wrote it with me, was this song I hate the most in the world. It's called *Bless them all, bless them all, the long, the short and the tall*. It's these blousy women sitting in a pub in England, sending anything in pants off to get killed. Because then they will not be bothered and can just sit and drink beer and talk about what they want to talk about. That's the basic character I see as masculinity. That's the eventual masculin-

ity. I don't like masculine things. I never wanted to be a boy when I was a kid. I never got it. You do it and you do it enough to survive. But past the survival point, I really don't see the use of it.

[Lawrence chuckles and gets up to open the window. He returns with a bottle of whiskey.]

LW: I am going to open a bottle of whiskey. Don't worry.

KDJ: I hope you will remain fresh for questions.

[Lawrence returns to the table without his whiskey.]

LW: I am fresh for questions.

[Lawrence makes a facial expression and goes back to the kitchen to get glasses. Sarah points to Karlyn and says:]

SG: She is a tough cookie.

[All laughing.]

LW: Alright, can I say something? This is the first day that I feel I am with my own class. But: I know we are working on a project. But do you know something? The project is your responsibility, not mine. I am just a *levende pop* [living puppet]. I am trying very hard not to be too funny, but I... just ask me the questions and stop being so apologetic.

KDJ: Okay.

LW: I am telling anecdotes, because you are asking me private things. I realize that I don't like talking about other people's lives. It's open. But it's not open for the people who just read the books that we make. It's a real problem too about intellectuals. You are going to hate me for this, and you specifically...

[Lawrence points to Sophia.]

LW: I'm not interested in being friends with the people that have an immediate use of what I do, because they are not bringing anything into the world yet. I'm interested in the people who have to change their mind. That's the real interest. Everything else is art social service: you put it on the table and let people taste it. But the real interest is to take the people, who already come out with *volgens mij* [according to me] or the one with the woman who is always about men: "He always has this and he only likes this". It drives me up the wall. It is very European, so it hasn't changed and that's it. That's a quick answer to your question: It's reality rather than opinion. You have to take your life out *volgens mij* [according to me]. Otherwise you lost.

[Lawrence gets up.]

LW: If it is only say *volgens mij* [according to me], it's the same thing you have been fighting all your life.

[Lawrence now walks to the kitchen and tells about how he makes drawings for newborn babies and that he sends these drawings in his whiskey cans. Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia prefer water and Lawrence finds a bottle of *Spa rood* [Dutch sparkling mineral water]. While Lawrence is in the kitchen, the women quickly evaluate the progress of the 24 hours in Dutch. Sounds of crystal. Lawrence brings cups and glasses to the table. Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia clear the table. They decide to leave the nuts, raisins and dried pineapple on the table for the ones who like to nibble. Lawrence then walks to the table where he put the book *Personal Structures* and turns some pages. He looks at a photo of Karlyn and says:]

LW: I just love that look.

KDJ: Thank you.

SG: That's her specialty.

LW: Do you practice?

KDJ: No, it's natural. I cannot do it any other way.

[Karlyn pours everybody a glass of water.]

LW: *Geen water voor mij* [no water for me]. No, I'm going to have some whiskey.

[The sound of water being poured in glasses. Then a big plop: Lawrence opens his bottle of whiskey. He fills his glass.]

LW: It's good whiskey. Would you like a little glass?

SG: Later.

LW: I will give you a little glass when you want to join in.

[Lawrence puts back the cork. Then he walks to the kitchen to get more bread. Meanwhile, Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia discuss the whiskey in Dutch: it's Scotch, single malt. Lawrence returns to the table and tells about how he became acquainted with whiskey when he was doing a show in Edinburgh.]

LW: I have a taste for whiskey. Whiskey has the odd thing that people get pretentious about it. I love cigars, I really do. I stopped smoking them in public places, or when people were around. It wasn't about the smoking thing: I am a big shot and can smoke in any place I fucking want. I smoke in California.

[Sarah laughs.]

LW: I am just a nice person. When you are not supposed to smoke in a hotel room, I don't. Someone's got asthma and I just go outside.

[Lawrence gives more examples and tells about his studio in New York, where he can easily go outside to smoke.]

LW: But other than that, I don't like the pretence. It became this whole thing. I don't like snobs. I don't like connoisseurs. I like amateurs. The French word *amateur* is such a nice word.

KDJ: I like it too.

LW: People who actually like something. But a connoisseur is somebody who knows something. I really love amateurs: they are always so apologetic, but they are the ones who say: "Have you tasted this?"

[Lawrence whispers:]

LW: It tastes pretty good.

[He chuckles, and remembers he wanted to get his camera.]

LW: I want to take a picture.

SG: We also brought a camera.

LW: We need some light.

KDJ: Lawrence, if you want, my camera has a self-timer.

LW: Okay, let me first do this and see if I can make it work.

[Lawrence has his small, red video camera in his hands and tries to make it work. He takes a few steps back from where he was standing in order to have a good view of the table.]

LW: I shot all my cartoons with this, but I haven't used it in about two years. And everything changes. Tape!

[A short silence followed by a high beep. Then another silence followed by another beep. And again the same is repeated. Law-

rence chuckles. From where he is standing with his camera, he says in the direction of the table:]

LW: You don't have time to make your look!

[Karlyn and Sarah laughing. Lawrence moves the camera from left to right. While making hand gestures, Sarah says:]

SG: Sophia Thomassen, Karlyn De Jongh, Sarah Gold, Lawrence Weiner.

[And Lawrence turns the camera in the direction of himself.]

LW: This is probably the last time I will be using this camera.

KDJ: But it's a nice camera.

LW: Hmmm, three warm women in a cold boat or three cold women in a warm boat.

[All laughing.]

SG: We will have to find out.

[Lawrence puts his camera on the table where he earlier put the *Personal Structures* book. He sees the photo of Karlyn together with Keith Sonnier and says:]

LW: Oh my God! One day I am going to call back the favor: I am going to ask you to be in my next film.

KDJ: Okay.

LW: Okay? That is absolutely astounding.

[They talk about Keith Sonnier for a moment. In the meantime, Lawrence walks back to the table. Something is happening to the plates.]

LW: Now, questions please. Before I forget where I am. You have to ask me direct questions. I don't have a story written down. I read

so many and some of the ones people have written are so much more interesting than reality.

[All laughing.]

LW: You think I am joking!

[Lawrence takes a sip of his whiskey.]

KDJ: From a certain point you started hitchhiking, or were you more like a hobo?

LW: It wasn't a hobo!

KDJ: Okay, what was it then?

LW: I was living practically in squats. I wanted to get to places. In those days anyhow, people hitchhiked. I wanted to go to San Francisco and be a beatnik. I tried to talk this girl into going with me. It didn't work. I decided to go anyhow. I went to the Lincoln Tunnel, put my thumb up and went to California.

KDJ: Nice.

[Lawrence puts something in his mouth. While chewing he says:]

LW: It was a very interesting trip.

[Sarah, also with her mouth full, says:]

SG: What were the stages? How did you survive?

LW: The same way as everywhere. I survived.

SG: But you could work a little on the trip? Or would people take you?

LW: That trip, no. That trip, no.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette again.]

LW: How did I survive?

[Lawrence puts on a Southern American accent and says:]

LW: Would you like another cup of coffee? Yes, thank you. Do you have any money? No. Would you like a bowl of chili's? Yes, thank you. I never did it with the lights on before.

[Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia laughing.]

LW: Yes, how do you survive? What was I? 17 years old. I already had two years of college. I just left.

SG: What made you leave?

LW: I had a problem. Happily. A good problem: I really wanted to do what I was doing and change the world. But I was so heavily under the influence of people I was in 'awe' of. The abstract expressionists and all of those. Like I said, I was integrated into that world. There was something missing, something was wrong. I was getting too good at being what it was supposed to be. And I had this personal sense of survival. The only way to do it was to get away from it. San Francisco was the beatnik paradise, with the City Lights Bookshop. It was almost coming to an end. That would be what attracted me. I wouldn't have minded going to Paris or anything. Because I was working class, I knew that if I had to find work, I could find work. The people were much nicer in those days. Even for a kid with long hair. And this was the 50s remember? It was heavy times. It was easy traveling: Truck drivers would give you a ride or a frustrated housewife would take you for seven or 800 miles. I was 17 years old and life was a completely different ballgame. You might have been educated, you might have been smart, but you were still 17. I just got a chill, I don't know why, I will get another drink.

When I got to San Francisco, I didn't know anybody. I was sleeping under doorways, until I figured it all out. I was getting by, just about. A set designer gave me some work. And then the people at City Lights were sort of nice to me.

[Lawrence continues about the people from City Lights and others he met in San Francisco.]

LW: I managed and somehow fell into place. I did my explosions. I used to hitchhike every three or four weeks back to New York. I would stop in Denver and Chicago and I went up to Canada. I organized labor in Vancouver and then I got busted and they threw me out so by chance I happened to have a very romantic life. I used to go back and forth a lot. I used to go to Mexico.

SG: Where did you get the TNT from, for the explosions?

LW: I had an old expired blasting license from somewhere, because I worked on a construction crew. And I bought it in a store. In those days you could buy anything you wanted. You know those photos from the *Op Losse Schroeven* catalog, where I am sliding the flares? Those are the flares from the army surplus from the Second World War. I bought them in New York. I carried them in my bag!

[Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia are amazed.]

LW: On the airplane to Amsterdam! Times were so different. The ones they had here were these strange things they used for the road. They were ugly. The museum could only afford two. They look like candles.

[Lawrence tells the anecdote about the TNT and his show at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.]

LW: Mine I bought on Canal Street for \$.50. That's why I don't like to talk anecdotally about these things: It doesn't make any sense.

[What follows are stories about librarians, jail sentences and guns in California. Then about a dangerous situation with machetes Lawrence experienced in New Guinea.]

LW: That's the whole idea about life: Do it well, set it up, and make it clear that the point of it is what you are doing. We were doing this project. It wasn't the point that we wanted to show that we were as good as them. And that's the same with the art world, it's much better to make an absolutely perfect exhibition. Because of that kid that's going to walk in, that is what they are going to see. They are not going to know the bullshit about you and this one and this one at all.

SG: The idea of that project Papua New Guinea was that you work with local artists.

LW: And I got there and realized that that would be exploitative.

SG: That was the reason?

LW: That was why they sent me. When I got there, I realized that that would be exploitative. That that would absolutely be the most disgusting thing that could happen. Who was I to tell another person how the fuck to make a good piece of art? So, I just started this project about ampersands and parentheses. That went across the whole place. I did drawings in a filofax and everybody thought it was fine.

[Lawrence continues to tell about his experiences with the artists in Papua New Guinea.]

SG: How did you start with the explosions?

LW: It was a big mistake. Each one of them was going to be an individual sculpture. And of course, every one of them was an individual sculpture, but that didn't make them interesting: a hole in the ground is a hole in the ground. The idea of a hole in the ground

functioning as sculpture is interesting. It took me five or six years to figure that all out and in the meantime I stopped making art. I got disillusioned with everything. And then I made only things for children. I made these children's paintings. And then slowly, I started to slip back into making work again.

SG: Was there a certain point in your life that you decided to become an artist?

LW: I guess, yes.

SG: Was that a conscious choice at that time?

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: Conscious things are... I was going to school and they wanted to throw me out and put me in a nice school, because I got arrested too many times. I was working and wasn't paying any attention. But I had some teachers who were taking me on as a pet. They thought I was going to be a philosophy professor. They were willing to carry it through, although it was \$100 at the time. After they saw a collage of mine, they came to me and told me they knew I was going to be an artist. I must have been about 16 at the time. And I thought: "Yes, that's what I'm going to be, an artist." That's what I wanted to be. The next day, somebody advised me not to do my BA, but "If you want to become an artist," he said, "You should go out there and be an artist." "If you want to have a kid, you will have to teach, so get some art under your belt." "If you have to teach, they will make you an honorary professor, but if you have your BA, they want you to get an MA and eventually a PhD as well. And you don't like school that much." It was the best advice anybody had ever given to me.

KDJ: Did you enjoy going to school?

LW: I loved school when I was a kid. I loved learning things. Why would I work all night in the docks to keep myself in high school? I just didn't get around to do my homework often.

[Lawrence coughs.]

LW: With so many exciting things going on.

[Lawrence smiles.]

LW: I must have been a real pain in the ass. Maybe they are telling the truth.

[They discuss the university system in the United States.]

KDJ: You quite often do work for children. Why do you like it so much?

LW: I do not like or dislike it. When I went to university or when I went to school, one of the things that politically minded people did in my days was, especially men and especially men or girls who were tough, who really were in politics, who really did know what it was like to do things, took education courses for kindergarten and things, so that if there was ever a change around, we could squeeze our way in and it was great to have somebody that was a commando teaching kindergarten. But you had to get your qualifications, so I did a lot of these courses as a lower schoolteacher. A lot of people from my generation did. For that reason: it was a political decision. Working with kids is fun. I like to work with kids. I like kids. I like dogs too. I like cats, but I don't want to live with them. Dogs are something else, they don't bother you. Kids are very *zelfstandig* [independent].

[Lawrence tells about his grandchild.]

SG: Because you also say that you don't like family meetings, I have the feeling a so-called 'normal' life is really not for you.

LW: I live a very desperately, desperately boring existence. You don't get all this work done by having an exciting existence.

KDJ: Do you prefer to be alone most of the time?

LW: No.

KDJ: Do you like company?

LW: I guess so, I've lived with somebody for so long. I can manage to be alone. It's not dreadful for me. But I like people around. Genuinely, I like living with people.

KDJ: It's nice to share things with another person.

LW: It's more interesting when you are working, then you can show it to somebody. The problem with domestic life is that after a while, when you are going to show it to somebody, they are already fed up with you by that time, because of the outside world. It's you, you, you. You have that in every relationship. After a while it just gets really strange, I am not paying a lot of attention to myself, but other people are. And they talk about it and they talk about it. You don't get to say:

[Lawrence makes a hand gesture.]

LW: *Kijk eens* [look]. Which is what children do. And it's what artists do too. You do your work and then you want to say:

[Lawrence repeats his hand gesture.]

LW: *Kijkeens...* [look] You don't want to hear: *Wat mooi* [How beautiful].

[Lawrence chuckles.]

KDJ: Is Alice critical about your work? Do you still talk about it?

LW: Yes, she is. I am also still critical about other people's work. But it's work, it's not you. And every omelet isn't great. I've read it somewhere:

it's called profundity. You want somebody to look at it if you want to hear more than *O, wat mooi. Dat is niet genoeg* [That's not enough].

KDJ: When you say it's your work and not you, is there a difference for you between yourself and your work?

LW: Yes, there is. But if I fuck up, my feelings get hurt just as much as another person's. I have feelings and things, but it's not me. It's not a reflection of me.

[Lawrence rolls a new cigarette.]

LW: How I deal with it in the world is a reflection of me. But it's not me. It's not a representation of me.

KDJ: What do you mean, when you say it's not you?

LW: Things are made by people for other people. But being a person, you also have your own feelings and your own existence and everything. I don't see the work as me. It's not me. I'm very proud of it, I like it when it works. I like getting compliments, just like anybody else.

[Lawrence closes his pack of tobacco.]

LW: But if it doesn't work, and it was a good shot, I can be upset, I can be depressed. But I don't feel I am *verminderd* [reduced]. If the second time it doesn't work, then I am *verminderd*. Then I'm not functioning.

[Lawrence takes a sip of whiskey.]

LW: But there's also this other thing, it's not going to work all the time. Somebody can say: "It should have been green". I have to listen. But it's not you. That's the problem that people with celebrity have. Do end up doing strange things, like going into a bar even if it's not the people you're interested in, but they have no way of knowing who the hell you are. It's like when somebody's cruising

you, there's something left in you that doesn't go with the whole package. It can lead to embarrassing situations, but that's life. At least you know that there is something left in you that has a certain charm. You forget sometimes, you loose it. You begin to think that you are just another kind of presence. It's the same problem with some of the earlier artists we have been talking about. They forgot that it has to be them outside of the uniform, outside of who they are in the world. Just every once in a while. That's different. That's personal. You wanted personal? That's personal. And that's a major problem. You like it. You like the idea that you have access to the entire world, practically. Because the art world is international.

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about a dinner at the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam.]

LW: People are not dumb. They really are not anti-art. They don't understand the economics of it. They don't understand the necessity of it. But they are not dumb. I make art for people. Not just for people who went to art school. There are an awful lot of other people in the world. There are.

[Lawrence puts his cigarette in his mouth and says:]

LW: Most of them not nice.

[And while lighting his cigarette:]

LW: The majority of the people are not nice. The majority of the art world is not nice.

[Lawrence puts his lighter back on the table.]

LW: Especially the people who base their entire career on being nice. They are the least nice. It's true.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

KDJ: You travel a lot for your work, do you still like traveling?

LW: I used to. It used to be so exciting. And now, forgetting about the physical problems, I still don't find it that exciting. I travel and that's how I make my living. And I always felt that it was better to take the reasonable opportunity and to work publicly and make a living, than it was to spend your time... secondly, I got myself involved as an artist in having a conversation that was *mondiaal* [global], in the world. Sometimes the world doesn't have the means to get to you. And they can arrange means to get you there. But in fact: Do I need a show at BAK? Do I need a show in Budweis in the Czech Republic? I can't even explain it to myself sometimes. I feel it's part of my social responsibility. And if they can manage to carry the damaged freight... if you look at my exhibition list... I like to work and I do a lot of work, but I'm afraid it's getting a little bit physically damaging. But if they can manage the damaged freight, I'm more than willing to try.

KDJ: You don't seem to need many of the exhibitions that you're doing. Is there an exhibition you would still like to do, that you desire?

LW: I can't think of what. Yeah, there are some things that if I did, I would feel very excited. But after a while, you have retrospectives in the cities where you work and you have retrospectives in cultures that adopted you and they are well attended and paid attention to. I don't know. In Los Angeles, I had a real relationship with Los Angeles. But a genuine relationship, like outside of this other world that now exists. It goes all the way back. It was so gratifying to me. There were two parties at the opening. One was this fabulous party, this naked lady party with a swimming pool I did a piece for. But then there was another party, that an old friend of mine, an artist, threw. He happens to have just as a chic house, in the same neighborhood.

[Lawrence tells about the party and lights his cigarette again.]

LW: If you're being honest and you're being open, there are things you don't bring up, because there is no way another person can relate to it, without believing you. I don't want anything I am talking about, that somebody would have to believe me. I tried to talk about anything and if people would take the trouble, they can get back, they can find somebody that remembers.

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about proving being in an exhibition. Then about the talk at BAK.]

LW: Art is a fight, it's an angry thing. It's supposed to be. Not that you bite people, but it's an angry thing. It's about taking people's dreams away. When you change a basic perception of reality, you change somebody's entire sense of themselves. I studied existential philosophy. I would like to know where the fuck killing a stranger came in as being an existential act. Since existentialism is essentially religious.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: If you cannot go out and deny your creator in public, you are not being existential are you? Why kill a stranger? It's such a bourgeois idea. It worked for Camus, but he had such a different concept of life. He was a resistance hero.

[Lawrence tells about Camus.]

LW: I am a funny person. You can drop me almost anywhere and I will be alright. But I have trouble getting from here to the central station. It's a big deal. I can do it for other people.

[Lawrence tells the anecdote about how he got Hanne Darboven through the United States customs. Karlyn pours Sarah, Sophia and herself another glass of water. They talk about the situation in New

York where everybody knows everybody. Then the phone rings: somebody is trying to send a fax. Lawrence gets up to check the machine.]

LW: It's getting dark.

KDJ: Shall we switch on the lights?

LW: Oh, it's getting eerie and you will be frightened.

[All laughing.]

LW: You want to switch on the light? You'll have to go outside, on the dock, and pump up the thing...

[All laughing and Lawrence switches on the light.]

SG: If you want to make a phone call, you can.

LW: I shall. We'll get to your questions. You are not going to loose me. I am not a European artist. I might fall asleep in my chair, because I haven't slept for days.

[They chat about making pictures and how beautiful the light was in the morning. Meanwhile Lawrence lights his cigarette. Sarah tells about how she and Karlyn spent the week in a holiday home in Flevoland. Lawrence goes to the toilet. The toilet is behind the kitchen and is not a separate room. From the toilet, Lawrence continues the conversation and explains how it happened that there never was any light on the toilet.]

LW: The whole boat is made by hand.

KDJ: Who made it?

LW: Mostly Alice.

[Sarah tries to prepare the self-timer of Karlyn's camera.]

LW: Now it is ok. It was worse before. I sort of like it.

SG: It's uncomplicated.

LW: Well, it's complicated.

[Karlyn gets up to help Sarah with the self-timer. In the meantime they chat about the holiday home in Flevoland. Karlyn goes back to the table. While Sarah continues to explain Lawrence about her and Karlyn's way of living, Karlyn talks to Sophia in Dutch about how she is doing. Lawrence returns from the toilet.]

LW: I don't drive.

[Lawrence washes his hands in the kitchen.]

KDJ: You still don't have your driving license?

LW: I never learned how to drive. It's not about a driving license.

[The four continue to talk about driving. And Lawrence searches for things to eat. He finds *stroopwafels* [Dutch syrup waffles] he got from a Mexican friend and brings them to the table. Sophia goes to the toilet. Lawrence shows Karlyn and Sarah around the boat. While standing in the center of the room, Lawrence says:]

LW: I have really no idea why I feel affectionate towards the two of you, but I do. So, let's just play it that way. Is that alright?

[Karlyn and Sarah agree. Then Sophia comes back.]

LW: You could have flushed the toilet. There is enough water. Next time. It's a joke that they tell people in the country when there are water problems: If it's yellow, let it mellow; if it's brown, flush it down.

[All laughing.]

LW: I use the grey water to flush the toilet. That's what the bucket is for.

[Lawrence tells about how it used to be with the water situation on the boat. Karlyn asks Lawrence why he originally came to Amsterdam. Lawrence says it's a complicated story and that he doesn't want it in this publication. Then they walk back in the direction of the table. Sarah and Karlyn arrange the camera settings for the self-timer. Lawrence opens the window. While Sarah goes to the toilet, Lawrence and Karlyn have a short conversation about putting a world-class show together within the circumstances of the boat and how ludicrous that is. When Sarah is back from the toilet, she tries to take some pictures. Karlyn and Lawrence check the sound recording. Lawrence pours another glass of whiskey. Then he gets up to close the window. After sitting down again, he reads the fax that just came in. It is about a multiple people want him to make. Karlyn refills the glasses with water.]

SG: Are you comfortable working with given themes?

LW: What's the difference. If you don't want to pay attention to it, you don't. Let's be rational, what's going to be the big problem? The question of what a given theme is, is very subjective. I don't care. I only do these things as favors anyhow.

[Lawrence continues to read the fax and then decides to call his studio in New York and speaks with Bethany. Karlyn takes the opportunity to go to the toilet. Lawrence fills his glass again. Karlyn returns to the table. Karlyn and Sarah then discuss in Dutch the next step to take and decide that when Lawrence finishes his telephone conversation, they will ask him for a few statements. Sarah then gets up to take a few more photographs. Lawrence now speaks with his daughter. When he puts down the phone, he asks Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia to join him to the center of the boat to gossip without his

words being recorded. After a few minutes, they return to the table and Lawrence tells more anecdotes about his life in Amsterdam.]

KDJ: Lawrence, if it is okay with you, we would like to do some of the statements for the CD.

LW: Absolutely.

KDJ: Is that okay?

LW: My dear...

[Lawrence makes a facial expression.]

LW: I feel like a mail-order bride.

[All laughing.]

LW: But please, please: not like *The Piano*. Don't cut my finger. Please, I have enough trouble.

[Karlyn and Sarah explain to Lawrence what they intend with the statements. Then they start.]

KDJ: Entropy.

LW: The only thing that is interesting to work with as a sculptor is entropy. You can't beat it, but you can use it.

KDJ: All the ships at sea.

LW: I have been using that lately much more than I had used it before. Which is odd, because it's my way of saying... I don't like the 'German' word Team. And I don't like: "Can you tell all the other people?" So, essentially I will say: "Warm greetings to you and all the ships at sea." and that basically stands for anybody that is engaged in an endeavor. And that's what 'all the ships at sea' means. And it always meant that, it seems. Not just for me.

SG: Ducks on the pond.

LW: The expression is a duck on the pond, since ponds are in the country and people in the country have guns. And if a duck is on the pond, it's going to get its ass shot.

SG: Camel in the desert.

LW: I've never seen a camel in the desert. Oh yes, I have: I've seen a desert in Australia. A camel in the desert is a ship at sea.

ST: Free love.

LW: I don't know what it means, since love is an engagement. Free love is a fantasy.

ST: Alcohol.

LW: The end-result of somebody distilling something for some other purpose. I don't really know about alcohol, I drink it. I don't have a thought about it. It evaporates. That's my quote: It evaporates.

KDJ: Amsterdam.

LW: Surprising Amsterdam.

KDJ: New York.

LW: They love New York.

KDJ: God.

LW: It's something I have no idea what to say.

SG: Language.

LW: The means visually, physically, sensually, audibly and otherwise that people communicate with.

SG: Material.

LW: The stuff that we work with.

ST: Statement.

LW: I have made the book *STATEMENTS*. *STATEMENTS* is a list of what you've paid for.

ST: Sensuality.

LW: Desire.

KDJ: Desire.

LW: The only acronym for desire is desire.

KDJ: Freedom.

LW: Not having to aspire.

KDJ: Women.

LW: Different every place.

SG: Your body.

LW: Rather disappointing at this moment.

SG: Your brain.

LW: Seems to still function.

ST: Beauty.

LW: Pleasure.

ST: Sex.

LW: Desire.

KDJ: Water.

LW: One of the nicest materials to make art with.

KDJ: Death.

LW: Absolutely no idea. I would prefer to avoid it for as long as possible.

SG: Concept art.

LW: I have no idea what it means. I have no desire to know what it means.

SG: Sculpture.

LW: The things, and I will use Ad Reinhardt, the things you trip over in the dark.

ST: Time.

LW: Is off the essence. But time is a material, simply a material to be used. Simply a material to be used.

ST: Space.

LW: There's two spaces. There's the acronym space for the universe. And space for enough room. I prefer enough room.

KDJ: Existence.

LW: Time to question.

KDJ: Future.

LW: Future is all we have. Because there is no present. By the time you see the present, it's the past. By the time you do that, the future is something we see in front of us. The future is now.

SG: Friendship.

LW: Admirable.

SG: Font.

LW: A choice of style. A choice of grace. A choice of elegance.

ST: Fame.

LW: Aspirable, useful, and fleeting.

ST: Home.

LW: Home is where the heart is.

KDJ: Honesty.

LW: No idea what it means. You have to be dishonest to know what honesty means.

KDJ: Artist.

LW: Moi.

SG: Lawrence Weiner.

LW: Artist.

ST: Integrity.

LW: Again, you have to be dishonest to know what integrity means.

ST: Human.

LW: Heaven knows.

KDJ: Meaning.

LW: That which other people can use to understand their own place in the world.

KDJ: Now.

LW: Future.

SG: Sentiment.

LW: The things that people use to tell them that what's happening is not so bad.

SG: Truth.

LW: Multiple.

ST: Traveling.

LW: Sometimes exciting, most times tiring.

ST: Philosophy.

LW: The means that we try to explain to people who haven't yet thought about their place in the world.

KDJ: Utopia.

LW: Utopia means no place in Latin, doesn't it? Utopia means no place. Utopia is non-existent.

KDJ: Youth.

LW: Self-evident.

KDJ: Child.

LW: The issue of human beings is called children. The issue of horses is called foals.

SG: As long as it lasts.

LW: Sculpture.

SG: Slowly raised water.

LW: *Langzaam stijgend water*. Just a physical sculpture. It's totally physical.

ST: Out of the blue.

LW: Totally physical.

ST: Speed is of the essence.

LW: Obvious.

KDJ: Drugs.

LW: Sometimes interesting, more for the person using them than the person that has to put up with the person using them.

[All laughing.]

KDJ: Tattoo.

LW: *Ketting* [chain]. It's just a nice, self-imposed ornament. It's a mark of Cain.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

SG: Music.

[Long silence.]

LW: Phuuut.... I don't know. Music, melodic noise. Music is melodic noise.

SG: Money.

LW: Exceedingly useful. I can't make a moral judgment. Exceedingly useful.

ST: Books.

LW: Marvelous.

ST: Color.

LW: Democratic, because no one sees color the same.

KDJ: Lost in translation.

LW: Not a bad movie.

[After a pause he adds:]

LW: Nothing is lost in translation.

KDJ: Ownership.

LW: An acceptance of responsibility.

SG: Possession.

LW: An acceptance of usability.

SG: Work of art.

LW: The product of one human being for another, to be given to another.

ST: Career.

LW: Unpleasant necessity.

ST: Museums.

LW: If they would open the windows, wonderful places.

KDJ: Art critics.

LW: People who are interested in what people who make art do.

KDJ: Hope.

LW: It's a hospital ship. It is.

KDJ: Thank you.

LW: Is that it? I like that it is a hospital ship. Instead of *volgens mij* [according to me] which is not really an answer to that. But everything I have said, I will stick by.

KDJ: You often stick to things you said before, also with the publication of your symposium text about time for the book *Personal Structures*, you just didn't really change anything.

LW: Unless something has come about that's changed. I did a series of drawings for Jaffa. They are all about the fact that 'all the way up', 'all the way down'. And aspiration is all the way down. Desire is all the way up. And that's something I genuinely believe. I used to think that aspiration was important for people. The more I look at it, aspiration means that you already know what you're shooting for. And desire is: you would like the state of something, but you don't quite know how to do it. And that's serious. People who aspire towards being something, they usually want to be somebody else. They can see what it is they want to be. They want to be Marilyn Monroe, for example. But that's not quite right. Desire is to be as Marilyn Monroe. The only time that 'as' is as good... it's that problem in German: *Du bist wie eine Blume* [You are like a flower] from Heinrich Heine.

[Lawrence cites the entire poem in German.]

LW: Sorry but yes, it's true. Why not *Du bist eine Blume* [You are a flower]? I'd prefer that. That's the whole problem about aspiration and things: 'you are as' rather than 'as you are'. I don't want to be as somebody. I want to be the thing itself.

KDJ: It seems you don't have many dreams. But...

LW: I have dreams, but they are usually not very exciting. I do have fantasies. And the trouble with fantasies is, that they seize being feasible after a while.

KDJ: Does that mean you pass the point that they are interesting?

LW: No not interesting, but that they are capable of being. Because you do see yourself in a pragmatic sense. You can't fantasize about being a charming nine-year-old. You're not nine years old anymore. There are some things that, when I was younger, I had a fantasy about. A change of state or something. But as you get older it's no longer feasible. And so therefore they are not really fantasies. They are things that when somebody else has the desire, you can appreciate it. You learn from the fact that if you had that desire and they have it, you can help them. If it's feasible, you help them. But other than that, it's a very complicated thing. Isn't it? It's all nice to think that you can have your Rolex. But there comes a point that your eyes are not even good enough anymore to read your Rolex. So, what's the use of having it? And you become a realist about it. Realism is not that you cannot have another fantasy that you think might just be happening. Dreams are always about something you are dissatisfied with. And you have a dream that it will be a better situation. But you are always taking something that you already knew. And in fact, you cannot have what you already knew. It's not yours. That's the thing with time. It is of the essence, because as it moves on, it changes. Present is the future. There is no present. If you're telling me how you feel, you are telling me how you felt.

[Lawrence cuts several slices of cheese.]

LW: In a physical state, you are telling me how you felt. That's very different than present. I am always angry at people, about people,

who are on the subway or on the tram. And you like it, because you have this little bit of time to float before going to work. And there are all these people you don't know around you and you are looking out of the window. And somebody is telling you how different it is from some place else. You never get to experience it. You never see anything. That's the only trouble with historians. Relativist history: It is always related to something which means you don't pay attention to what you are doing. You close off from it. And that's sort of sad.

SG: We spoke about it and said it would be at least a month of study before you start to understand something.

LW: Not necessarily. It depends on what you are trying to understand. And there are some things that a month of studying won't tell you. Anthropology is a very interesting misuse of knowledge. Anthropologically, why would four strangers find themselves comfortable. That's an anthropological question, culturally. Each one has a different culture. And yet, with four other strangers it's very *eng* [scary]. You put up with it; you don't put up with it. That's anthropology, understanding the things you can understand. And I don't think that most people are capable of understanding everything. I cannot relate to certain kinds of people. To other people I can instinctively relate.

[Lawrence tells about education in Holland in the 70s and books about being Dutch.]

KDJ: Do you feel that after all those years you understand a little bit of yourself? Do you know who you are?

LW: I am not allowed to. Part of my professional ethic and part of, you know when the doctor says to do no harm, one of the problems of being an artist is that if you don't wake up in the morning and doubts about the validity of the world and you don't consider

yourself being part of the world, which means you have self doubt. So, I don't know. I am not sure. I have doubts about myself. I don't have to trust myself, I don't have any other choice.

KDJ: What kind of doubts do you have?

LW: Whether at the moment, what I'm putting out, is of any use to people without having to accept my belief pattern.

[Lawrence takes a sip of his whiskey.]

LW: The hardest thing about making art is to make something that comes out and has no authority and yet has enough of a free zone, enough of an interest that people try to integrate it into their life. The problem is that we have come to the point that there are more people writing about art than there are using it. And they have to know. And having to know, they then have to know about the person who made it. Knowing about the person who made it, has absolutely nothing to do with it. You don't have to be a good person to make very useful art. You don't have to be smart to be a good artist. You don't have to be anything, because in the end it's still...

[Lawrence lifts his glass and puts it back on the table.]

LW: ...the thing on the table. And people come to it and use it. Sugar can be used to what? To make molasses or rum. It can be used to make coffee, to kill a diabetic. And where is the objectivity?

KDJ: Do you think art is useful?

LW: Yes, because otherwise I wouldn't bother to do it. I am even a lucky person, since we're talking about the early times. I had other options that I considered useful. And I made the decision that art was far more useful for the society than my meager attempts to organize labor or my meager attempts about human dignity and rights. That if

I could give out another logic pattern I would probably do better for people. That's my choice. And that's a *volgens mij* [according to me].

SG: You know when that was, approximately?

LW: When I was about 16 or 17. I just had the realization that I had to make a decision. That I would make things that would block the way and open up ways at the same time. Or did I join into something I would at least get social acclaim for. I had to make that choice and that was to step out for me. I decided to give it a shot and I would really try to make art in the world and change people's perceptions of themselves and their own values. A little bit worked I must say, but everybody just does a little bit.

KDJ: To what extent do you think it worked?

LW: I changed a lot of logic patterns and the way people think about the way that they would be able to present what they are thinking to other people. That's the simplest one.

[Karlyn laughing.]

LW: That's the easiest one. That way you don't have to get involved into moral values or anything else. And it wasn't about style and it wasn't about form. It was about a logic pattern. That there is a way that you can communicate with other people, that doesn't rely upon the president of what was being used. Why don't I just take that? And the other stuff, the fact that I really and truly think that the work that I make, makes it possible for people to have a better appreciation of the world and a better appreciation of their life and let it go to that. But let's leave it at that, it made it possible. Let's say, it's like somebody is able to make a movie without being a victim. And yet without being an outsider. And it somehow enters the culture and makes something possible. That's fabulous. That's the simple level and we

keep it simple level, because the rest of it is all just... On Tuesday I might be thinking: "God, I really have done this", by Wednesday I begin to not only doubt it, but I start to see that somebody else did something that worked even better. And if it's public, I'll use it.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: And if it's not, I'll contact them and try to work with them. I don't like to steal.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette again.]

LW: I had the same as any other young person growing up in a counter-cultural thing, at times I had to steal something from an object, an idea, something that I never really enjoyed doing. So, I've decided not to do it as much as I possibly can. But it's not any moral value. If you're really hungry, you can steal a loaf of bread. What's the difference? If it gets to be a necessity, the morals go out the door. Somebody is trying to kill you and you have to kill them. I guess you do it.

[Lawrence takes a sip of whiskey.]

LW: I'm very grateful I never found myself in that sort of dilemma. But if you are in that sort of dilemma, you have to make a decision. That has nothing to do with conversation. And you have to live with it.

[Lawrence takes another sip of whiskey.]

KDJ: Are you disappointed that for all your hopes only this much has changed?

LW: No. Hey, you're only one human being. There are billions of people. No, I'm not disappointed at all. I'm not disappointed personally. Maybe dissatisfied.

KDJ: Dissatisfied?

LW: That's different from being disappointed. I am dissatisfied. I'm not pleased with the extent of the result. And I'm not pleased sometimes with what's come about, what's come out of it all. But that doesn't mean anything. I mean, who cares whether I'm happy or not?

KDJ: Well, you maybe care.

LW: Do I? I wouldn't know what to do about it. I care. Yes, I care. But again: That's stages in your life where you've done well, you've done good for people. And you continue to do good for people. But you're not terribly happy with what it means to you. But you have accepted all these responsibilities, it's this problem: you have to figure it all out. It's all very nice to be existentially free, but existential also means taking responsibility for what you do. You can't balance it, I can't figure it all out.

SG: Would you have done anything different in your life? If you would have a chance now, looking back?

LW: Looking back, no. Looking forward, yes. And if I intend to be able to do it, there's no way I can talk about it in public. That's something where it's not about honesty, it's about, it's not part of the game. Looking back, no. Yes okay, I regret I have hurt so-and-so's feelings and I should have been nicer to people, but that is nothing. Because you cannot even say you will do it better in the future, because it's not the same situation. Looking forward, I see things I would like to be doing differently. Then I'm put into the position of where I am. And I'm trying to change it radically. But again, that's not the kind of thing you can change. It's a hegemony, it's an imposition on you: You don't call up the culture which is your adversary at the moment and tell them what you intend to do. Because they are in a position to build up all the barricades possible. So, that's something I cannot talk with you about. I'm sorry.

SG: It's a question.

LW: It's a major question. The bullshit that happened in the last 20 years, that art is about a career, that wasn't what it was about. It was about making these things that people fell over, and they had to get up and decide whether they were worth walking around or throw them away. You know better, you do better. If you don't know better, you can't do better. And the whole point of artists is to develop not as themselves, but develop in their practice with a relationship to the world as it's changing. But that doesn't necessarily mean being on mode. That might just mean getting better in relationship to the world. Too many things we use today are made by people who were willing to take the chance that what they were doing was not going to work. All the ones that didn't work, you never heard of. That doesn't mean they didn't make the right choice, does it?

I'm sorry, it sounds so heavy, but it's the truth. I don't know what is expected of artists. Yes, we're stuck with it. Not mom and pop people. Opalka is a good example. I'm sorry, I really don't get it. It's this idea that the artist who believes...

[Lawrence looks at the microphone and says:]

LW: This is quotable...

[And then continues with:]

LW: ...that their own self-development is the whole reason for the existence of art. It doesn't have a fucking thing to do with self-development. Almost everything is science, philosophy, mathematics, art, cinema, music and cooking; it only functions in the stream of life. There are accidents and other things, but this self-involvement really gets to me.

[Lawrence sighs.]

LW: It really drives me up the fucking wall. I much rather live with a person who has a different view of the world sometimes. And it's not because I'm a nice person.

[Lawrence raises his voice.]

LW: Because I'm not! I don't mind getting my ass kissed once in a while. It's nice, but it has nothing to do with real life. Maybe in the end we should be satisfied with affection and some kind of an idea of interaction and not worry so much about the form that it takes for the outside.

[He tells about the small circle most people seem to be living in.]

KDJ: What do you look for in another person?

LW: Nothing! That's my problem. I don't even have a physical type that I'm attracted to. Yeah, there are things I like and there are things I don't like. But that's not the thing. I am surprised constantly by people. Mostly in my relationships with people, they find me interesting, because they are type-fixed. I'm not. They don't understand why I like X and Y on the same level, while they are totally obsessed with things that look like X. I am an artist, because I don't have an idea of what I will be doing next.

SG: For the museum in Bregenz you...

LW: I have an idea. I got what I wanted. Do you know what I got?

[Lawrence gets up from the table and walks to his desk. Lawrence mumbles words. Karlyn in Dutch says to Sarah and Sophia:]

KDJ: *We krijgen nu een fotootje van ons, denk ik.* [We are now going to get a photo of us, I think.]

[Lawrence comes back to the table with a piece of paper.]

LW: Look here. This is what I got.

[Karlyn and Sarah see their photo of them installing Lawrence's work on a wall in the Austrian museum, and start to laugh.]

LW: I carried it around the ocean.

[All laughing.]

SG: It was such a nice experience touching you, in a way.

LW: The installation is me. I mean, do I have to tell you exactly what... I mean, you are not a stupid person. You look at the drawing the same way as the woman at BAK, who was a real vinyl person. Three centimeters: nobody is going to notice. As long as the general idea was there. That's what I tried to do. I want everything to be so elegant and so beautiful. But I don't want somebody to go crazy of having to make the wall an extra half inch longer.

[Lawrence tells about the fights he had about this.]

LW: I'm part of the art world, right? I spent years that nobody even accepted it was art. How do you think I feel? You have no idea what my existence is like. And still, until today: I don't even have a BA, but they want me to be the rector of this art school. A rector! That's the person who makes all the decisions about the direction.

[Lawrence tells about his experience in Scandinavia and the academy that offered him the rectorship. Lawrence rolls a cigarette and says:]

LW: I don't know who I am. I'm a person who is really trying to participate in my culture and I do the best I can. And if it's accepted and it functions, I am really happy. But that doesn't make me think I

know more about this or that. I'm not modest. Maybe I am a realist. That was to big a speech wasn't it?

KDJ: You have said about your work that it is sensual. Why is sensuality so important to you?

LW: I hope so. It has always been very central to my existence, but now I am at the stage that when I wake up in the morning I feel reasonably confident as an artist. I am reasonably competent politically and as a person.

[Meanwhile, Lawrence pats his cigarette against the tabletop.]

LW: If you want anything there is lots of tobacco. But that's all I have. I don't have any ready-mades. As you feel you are loosing it physically, you begin to understand exactly what it is you're looking for. And you begin to see little things as sensual as well. I don't know why, but sensuality is an essential part of making art. The only thing why you make art is for people to have a relationship with objects. Shouldn't that object be sensual? If it's not sensual, it's very pragmatic. Even a bottle opener should be nice.

SG: Isn't that also because you are a sensual person yourself?

LW: How the hell would I know? I am one of those idiot children that the first time I really understood about sex, was the first time I had it. I was one of those people who would stand in the bathroom...

[Lawrence pulls all the muscles in his face.]

LW: ...and squeeze my eyes, hold my hand and dream about something that would excite me and wonder why nothing happened. Or: like a 32-year-old woman with a 15-year-old saying: "Hey, you have to move."

[All laughing.]

LW: It took me a while to get it together, so I'm not a sensual person more than anybody else. I have a friend who can excite herself just like that.

[Lawrence strokes his own arm and chest.]

LW: As a child she didn't understand she had a different sense of things and slowly she developed up. And it's not about fantasy, because meanwhile she is really engaged in talking with somebody else. It's not me.

[And to Karlyn:]

LW: Is it you? I think so.

KDJ: Yes, sometimes.

LW: You have a very good relationship with yourself. That is really not meant as a bad thing.

[To Sarah:]

LW: You are a little more outer directed. You are more like me. You are much more outer directed than Karlyn is.

SG: I can go crazy when somebody bites my neck.

[Lawrence opens his bottle of whiskey and offers Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia a glass. Sarah takes a little bit. Karlyn doesn't want it yet.]

LW: I like not eating by the way. I had a big dinner last night.

KDJ: We had pancakes.

LW: Oh, *pannenkoeken* [pancakes]. That's a big dinner. Did you have *met of zonder spek* [with or without bacon]?

KDJ: I had without.

SG: She is a vegetarian.

LW: I don't like pancakes with *spek*. But I do like *spek* with maple syrup, so with *stroop* [syrup].

[They speak about last night. Karlyn and Sarah tell Lawrence about the preparations for this project.]

LW: I told you before; I don't have any great insights. It's not being modest. I have insights. I have experience more than I have insights.

KDJ: Do you think other people think you have great insights?

LW: I don't know, you have to ask these three women who have come here on this cold day to sit on my boat. I made a nice show; I did my job.

[Lawrence then tells about sometimes wanting to stay at home and watch TV. And about being arm-candy.]

KDJ: Did you do a lot of drugs?

[Lawrence puts his cigarette in his mouth.]

LW: No.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: When I was young about 15, 13.

SG: What kinds of drugs were around then?

LW: Well, everything was around. I grew up in a place where heroin is a normal drug. Peyote you could buy in the store in those days. There were little shops that sold it, so you could eat the buttons,

vomit and... I'm not a big hallucinogenic person. I've tried it all. I did my thing and went to Berkeley in the early days. I didn't like it, so I didn't. There was lots of coke around. But I did morphine when I was a kid. Because I was tired all the time, because I was working. The woman I was living with had access to morphine. So, I did a lot of morphine and then I stopped. The only drug I really like is marijuana. I like it, but I don't seem to crave it or need it. And I live in two cities where it's really feasible. If I want it, I can have it. But that's about it; I'm not really a big drug person. I don't even like mushrooms all that much. Friends of mine were dropping acid, the way I am smoking cigarettes.

KDJ: Since when do you smoke?

LW: Since I'm 14.

KDJ: Did you ever stop?

LW: No, but I'm one of those weird ones. Once they change the rules, I don't have any problems on airplanes.

ST: Did you ever want to stop?

LW: I'm supposed to. I am going to die from it probably. I don't mean cancer. I have the problem that dancers have, I mean real dancers. They can't breathe and they smoke cigarettes because it heats up your lungs and you are able to get more oxygen. It's bad for you, but it helps you through. And I use it to help me get through when I have trouble breathing. The last couple of months I have been really tired. I made too many shows and went to too many places and I never fucking got it back together again. So, I have been smoking more than I usually smoke. But I don't have any problems in the theater, or during dinner or anything. Until I am in a place where you can smoke. Obviously, I am addicted, but obviously I can control it.

[Lawrence takes his pack of tobacco.]

LW: But this is all I smoke. People have to ship it to me from Holland or France. They didn't get it through the last couple of months. They had to ship it twice.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: They only sell Samson and Drum. But that is just processed tobacco. The Gauloises has no chemicals. It's so cheap that they don't do anything to it. Samson and Drum is total chemical. That's how they get it so blond and so sweet.

SG: And so nice and moist and...

LW: Well, this is nice and moist. This isn't bad.

[And then whispers:]

LW: This is wonderful.

SG: I will try one.

[Sarah takes Lawrence's tobacco and starts rolling a cigarette.]

LW: *Er zit geen lijm op het papier. Als je lijm wilt hebben, heb ik misschien nog ander papier in de kast ofzo.* [There is no glue on this paper. If you want glue, maybe I have other paper in the closet or so.]

LW: Are you guys going to be hungry? Because I can invite you to dinner or something.

KDJ: We could also order something.

[Then the conversation turns to the obligation of doing projects as a social service.]

KDJ: Why do you say "yes" to so many projects?

LW: Well, BAK was an interesting one I thought. It intrigued me. And I like the way Maria made that book about *Being Dutch* for the Venice Biennale. But it's not for free; I get the same fee as anybody else. Why I do it, I don't know. I never really had a day off.

KDJ: What's with MOVED PICTURES?

LW: Ah, MOVED PICTURES...

[In a teasing voice:]

LW: It's a cult, isn't it? It's all over the place. You know what MOVED PICTURES is? In the beginning, when I started to do media, you don't make media alone. I guess the first feature film was 1972. The problem was: how do you say, "This is the group?" Everybody gets credit on the things I do, as you know. But that's not enough, because there is still the question of what the group is. So, how was I going to say that the actors and I were doing something together? We had to have the name of a company. That was MOVED PICTURES. And everybody that has worked with me since the early 70s, is part of MOVED PICTURES. They're all home movies. And every time something gets on the radio, for example, you need a company. In the States, in order to start a commercial film you need to have an office and everything needs to be registered.

One day Alice and I had a problem. We were having a real conversation about how to finance everything. And I said: "Look, when I do get way over the edge," it was getting pretty close, "Why don't you take the whole movie company and publication company?" Alice is a fantastic editor. I said: "Why don't you take all of that. If the shit hits the fan, you've got something to live off until you get on your feet

again." Because we never had a lot of money. It still really doesn't exist. But it has certainly produced a lot of things. That's MOVED PICTURES, okay? But it still doesn't exist. It's not incorporated, it's not a company; it's MOVED PICTURES.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette. What follows are anecdotes about the movies Lawrence made.]

LW: It was magic at the time. Now it looks really strange. 1979. It's like another world, another time. I don't like to look at work of mine from the 60s or 70s. I don't get it. It's all part of the world. Okay, I am not much into nostalgia: you did it, you are proud of it, it's done. Maybe a generation that never saw it can see it once, but I don't see making a big deal out of it.

KDJ: You moved on for yourself.

LW: Well, let's say the world turned. Maybe I was in a shape that I was quick enough to dance with it.

[All laughing.]

LW: But you never know. No, I am serious: it's a very hard one to know. And it was a funny one to know.

SG: How did you come to the thought of making movies?

LW: I didn't like the mise-en-scène the work was being presented in, it was so odd and it didn't fit in. The first feature is that way, I didn't like this sense and I decided: I can do this. I don't know why I knew how to do it, but I knew how to do it. I brought together a group of people and we tried to build a mise-en-scène closer to my own life.

[Sounds of banging from outside.]

LW: I don't know what all the banging is. I think there is things in the water and when the ice breaks it bangs. I have no idea. If it was the *buurman* [neighbor], he would bang on the door and come right in.

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about how it used to be in the harbor.]

LW: I adore the history I have with Holland. I made so many beautiful things.

KDJ: You did a lot of projects here.

LW: Lots. I still do, but quietly. I don't have many problems with my projects.

[Lawrence knocks on the table.]

LW: The only time I had a problem is the first time I came to Holland for the *Op Losse Schroeven* exhibition, when a reporter hit me with his microphone saying you cannot say things like that. That was the time when people were trying to get up on the stage and beat the shit out of Phillip Glass. They really took it violently and then it was over. Then it became so soft, it didn't matter. I saw stars for two days. You cannot say things like that. Boom!

[Lawrence makes a hand gesture.]

LW: He just lost it. They threw a whole camera system at Klaus Hon- nef and me.

SG: Do you remember what you said?

LW: I have a problem. I am genuinely existential. I look at each thing when somebody asks me a question. That's why I read these things and get confused. Since it's not a question I would have asked, I don't remember. It saved me from, when getting older and older, "and I always say..."

[All laughing.]

LW: I have lots of friends who do that. But I don't know. I run off with the mouth and let my mind wonder. I know me. And I know I don't like ethnic cultures, but I am not a racist. I know that I don't get most things that are going on and I am certainly not a sexist, and fascist... The only place where fascism exists any longer is Italy. Because it's legal. And I think that all the people who voted to make it legal should be forced to live in New Jersey.

[All laughing.]

LW: I am serious. They should be done something to. It's over. You can't have it again.

[What follows is an anecdote about adolescents being upset about adolescent rebellion. Then they talk about art education and the new generation of artists that seems to be there.]

KDJ: Shall we order something to eat?

LW: Are you starving?

KDJ: Not starving, but I could eat something.

LW: I never ordered food in, in Holland, in my life. But they have been putting menus in the mailbox, but they are for Indian restaurants.

SG: Do you like Indian?

LW: I like everything. I don't have a problem with that. But I don't know if they'll bring it and whether they can bring it.

SG: I think it shouldn't be a problem.

LW: I never ordered food in Holland, in my life.

KDJ: Me neither. But let's make it the first time.

LW: You are hungry, aren't you.

KDJ: Yes, I could eat.

LW: Let's think.

[They decide to stay on the boat, because it is way too cold outside and inside they have a better opportunity to talk. Lawrence says that he cannot ride his bicycle because of his leg, which got shot one time in the 50s. Then he tells about the hatred for cyclists in New York. And the violence in Holland in the 70s.]

KDJ: You have already told several stories about violence in your life. You have been shot in your leg and were engaged in street violence.

LW: In my life? No, not really. Not so much.

[Lawrence knocks the table.]

LW: Most of the times I was being there, reduced the violence. My life looks very romantic. But remember, if you're a working-class person and you have to find a job, you have a choice: you can work at the 7-Eleven or you can work in the docks and do things and ship out. And I was a Romantic kid; I was not going to work in 7-Eleven. I made a romantic choice and sometimes it was a good choice, but with unpleasant results.

[The four get up from the table. Lawrence walks to the kitchen and checks what is in the cupboards. They realize they have enough cash in their pockets and they decide to indeed order take-out.]

LW: It might be amusing to order food. I've never tried.

SG: If you have never done it...

KDJ: We are going to have to try.

LW: You really are hungry, aren't you?

[All laughing.]

LW: Let's go in the light. This all burned out.

[The four move into the direction of where the light is working. Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia check the menu. Lawrence walks back to the table and raises his voice to ask Karlyn:]

LW: Did you meet with On Kawara?

KDJ: No, not yet. It is my wish to meet him and I hope it will work out in the next few months, because I heard he is not doing very well. That he is smoking too much.

[Lawrence takes some of the food that is still left on the table.]

LW: He had some personal problems. Yeah, the smoking too much is really crazy.

KDJ: Do you know him well?

LW: No, I know him. We've done things together. I had lunch with him once in Düsseldorf. He introduced himself once on the streets, but I was with another artist with whom he was not pleased. So, he just introduced himself and walked away.

SG: Who was the other artist?

LW: The one you have asked me about. I was talking with him and he was just not happy with him. He didn't want to talk to him. But they had been friends, so I had no idea what had been going on. But I don't really know him. I know his wife. She is nice. He smokes too much, though.

KDJ: Do you like his art?

LW: I think he is a very good artist. And I think he is a very responsible artist. The whole thing with the newspapers and the boxes is all putting it in a context, but in fact I think he is a very good artist. I don't know how important it is. It is very existential, though. I don't know how important it is. I don't know what the point is. But, again, I am questioning the point more than anything else.

SG: Should we order just a couple of things?

[Sarah starts circling numbers on the menu.]

LW: Do you want a piece of paper? This is an artist's studio. We have it.

[Lawrence gets up and returns with a little notebook.]

SG: That's so tidy.

[In the meantime, Karlyn flips through pages of Lawrence's notebook.]

SG: It's like a diary, almost.

LW: It's for when I am traveling. When I am in my studio, I don't use it. When you are traveling, you make a note and put it in, the glue is weird. It's not really glued, some of it. No, it's not organic. It's totally not organic!

[All laughing. Lawrence opens the bottle of whiskey and fills his glass.]

LW: I make a lot of jokes, but I have a certain amount of civilization.

[Lawrence gets more water. Karlyn and Sarah arrange the choice of food in Dutch, while Lawrence tells Sophia about the restaurant where he had dinner the night before. Sarah calls the restaurant. Lawrence tells an anecdote about the problem of finding the boat.]

KDJ: Are you happy with your life at the moment?

LW: Not the last couple of days. That has nothing to do with you guys, but not the last couple of days.

[Lawrence walks away from the table. Sarah orders food. Lawrence returns to the table. Together they try to explain the address to the restaurant person.]

LW: They won't come.

[Lawrence lights a cigarette. Sarah hangs up.]

SG: 45 minutes.

LW: If nothing comes, then that's the way it is.

[Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia remain full of hope.]

LW: Alice took the *fiets* [bicycle]. Otherwise one of us could have gone out to get some *patat* [French fries]. I used to like that sometimes: to get really, really good wine and then get a whole pile of *patat*, bring them home, put them on the table and drink this incredible wine. With *patat*, mayonnaise *en pindasaus* [and peanut sauce].

[All laughing.]

KDJ: How did you get to your text pieces?

LW: By tram I think. Maybe I took the subway.

KDJ: We spoke with Joseph Kosuth about it and he told us a story about how you showed your paintings to a gallerist, but that he was more impressed by your notebook.

LW: That's bullshit. That was long before Joseph. That's a real problem. I've been using language for a really long time. I didn't agree with him

upon the idea, it's not the idea, it has to be something. With the paintings, we are talking about something else. I didn't make paintings unless somebody told me what to do. But it was good in the structure. Put Joseph somewhere else. Let Joseph be Joseph. Let me be me. The work had developed out long before Joseph thought of coming to New York. Joseph had a Fulbright; he was a Hicks, because only people from outside of New York were allowed a Fulbright. It was a special thing, so that they could come to New York.

[Lawrence puts some of the sunflower seeds in his mouth.]

LW: It became obvious that it was possible to deal with the language part of it. It was real simple and I put it together. I went to Paula Cooper and showed it to a lot of people. And then we made this book that came out in 68. In 1967 it was already laid out and we searched for a sponsor. It had nothing to do with all of these stories. It just became obvious that language was going to stand for that, because it was no longer the artist's hand, it wasn't philosophy, there was no confusion and it worked. Other artists began to pay attention to it. And it entered into the world. I showed everything with Seth Siegelaub until he wasn't a dealer anymore. And we moved on.

SG: How did you meet him? How was the relationship towards him?

LW: I don't know. It's not a joke. We found out later, that Seth Siegelaub graduated from the same high school I went to, the same year. We didn't know each other. I was involved in another kind of politics, I think. Seth was in the National Guard. It was 1962 or 63. I found myself in Provincetown, which at that time was the place to go. I was living under a bridge, I was broke. The girl I'd been living with sort of passed away. I was really upset and didn't know what to do with my life. I was walking down the street and somebody was sitting in a café. Then he said: "Lawrence!" And I said:

"Hey, Seth." Until this day, we do not know how we knew each other. We had a beer and we talked. He told me he was opening a gallery and he wanted me to think about doing a show and he wanted to come and talk with me about it. How he knew I was an artist, I honestly do not know. Also Seth doesn't know.

[Lawrence tells anecdotes about that time and working together with other artists.]

LW: This transition of what you call language was not really a transition. It wasn't radical at all. The book said *STATEMENTS*, because that's what you get at the end of the month that told you what you've gotten, materials and things like that. But it's also a *rekening* [bill / account]. *Alles staat op deze rekening* [Everything is on this account].

[Lawrence gossips. Suddenly they remark the time. The food can arrive any moment and Lawrence puts on the light in the entrance of the boat, so that the deliverer knows they are at home. Then they talk about Indian and Indonesian food.]

SG: What is the country or place you like most?

LW: I don't know. I like most places, I don't want to live in them, but I like them. I used to want to go to exotic places and so I went to exotic places. But I only go where there is work.

[Lawrence gets up and comes back with money.]

LW: We have enough small money. Small money is the problem.

SG: We also have money.

LW: Oh, don't bother. He is never going to come.

[All laughing.]

LW: I hope that, then I can prove to you that I am wrong, often. Because then he will come. Wouldn't that be nice?

[All laughing.]

LW: I don't know where to go anymore. I don't know exotic places. I like places where, if you make a mistake, you die. Like real jungle or the Arctic, but real places where there is no story. When you get out of it, you're fine. Nobody's interested in the story. Or: if you don't get out of it, you're dead. I have all these opportunities, I can work in any place in the world. And I can't think of any place where I want to be.

[While setting the table, they talk about where everybody wants to go.]

KDJ: Do you choose certain projects so that's you are able to see a place where you haven't been before?

LW: No, I am a *gastarbeiter* [guest worker]. They invite me and if it looks interesting enough, I'll go. The traveling is okay, it's a necessity. The *schlep* is too much sometimes. How many times can you show that you are a decent person and sit quietly in your hotel room? Because that's what you do most of the times when you're on the road. Or you get involved with this false friendship of people. I don't know. Multiculturalism is a necessity that doesn't work. Because you always have to listen to the apologies. And you always have to be kind because of this, because of that. While the other person has the easiest fucking life you have ever seen. And you are supposed to feel sorry for them. I mean, I freak out in Eastern Europe sometimes. Somebody has their little country house, they have this beautiful place on the top of their roof, they live very, very well and they have never not lived very, very well, and all they do is complain. That's really weird.

[The table is set. Lawrence rolls another cigarette. The conversation continues about European artists.]

KDJ: Last Saturday in Utrecht you said that you don't have the opportunity to speak with anybody anymore about the things you want to talk about. So, what are the topics that you want to talk about?

LW: That's true, I don't. This whole problem about XY and YX. And what constitutes X? And what constitutes Y? This idea of multiple realities, that's what interests me. All that stuff on the piece of paper I have there, that's what interests me. They don't interest anybody, because there's no way to make a career out of it. I'm not holier than that, I'm just as career-minded as the next.

SG: You have this star tattooed on your arm. Does that have a particular meaning?

LW: It's political. For the time, it is what it is.

[Lawrence points to his arm to show places where other people had a similar tattoo.]

LW: People had it here or here, so you could hide it with a watch or bracelet and go through borders. All the tattoos I've got are coverable.

[Lawrence points to his finger and says:]

LW: This is coverable, you can put a ring over it. When you mark yourself, it's beautiful and you do it, but sometimes you have to go through a border. I was working a lot in Eastern Europe and during different political times. It was a very good idea not to have a mark that they can notice. That's all. Very pragmatic.

KDJ: Why do you like tattoos?

LW: I love tattoos, because they are pretty. Do you find them pretty?

KDJ: I like them, but I don't think I would want one for myself.

LW: Something happened with tattoos and they became another thing. And you really have to want something.

[Lawrence yawns.]

LW: Or else it's not worth having. You really have to want it.

[The conversation continues about tattoos, then about age.]

KDJ: How many tattoos do you have?

[Lawrence points to his body parts.]

LW: This and that and that and that. I think that's all. Yeah, that's it.

KDJ: Would you consider a new one?

LW: It depends what. The star was a very common American and Dutch tattoo.

[Lawrence sighs and says:]

LW: That's a long time ago.

KDJ: Do you feel your life went fast, until this point?

LW: It still goes awfully fast. Sometimes I forget I was in Los Angeles making a show. I don't know; this is an interesting thing. I am very bad on dates. But I do remember each show, I remember what was shown, I remember who I worked with. I might forget their name, but I do remember who did what. It doesn't go that fast. If I was able to have a break sometime, a real break, it would come down and it wouldn't go so confusedly as it does.

KDJ: What would you do if you had a break?

LW: I have no idea. I honestly don't. It's strange when people live together and have a little bit of a free zone, I start to catch up on my

reading. I don't have a lot of time, so I lock myself up in the bathroom. I read articles. I'm interested in what people have to say. The new neo-post-Marxist conversation doesn't make any sense to me whatsoever. But I do read it. I read like other people do. I don't go to movies often, but I fly business class. I see everybody's movies on this size.

[Lawrence makes a hand gesture.]

LW: People bring music to my studio, because I don't go and *schlep* out to Brooklyn. They bring me a CD. I live a reasonably informed existence. But I don't participate all that much, unless I'm doing something. But when I do something, it gets really exciting. I mean, we shot that porn film in three days. That's 14 people with a 6 person crew. There weren't many anecdotes. We just worked. I don't know what I want to do. What should I do? I don't want to play golf.

[All laughing.]

LW: Some friends of mine started to play golf.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette and then tells about a holiday he had five years ago.]

LW: I don't get it. I don't know what you are supposed to do. It drives me up the wall. When you asked: "Do you mind being alone?" No, I don't do when I am working. I really don't mind at all. When people stop by when I am in New York, I am always happy when they leave again after two hours, so that I can get back to work, unless I am horny.

[All laughing.]

LW: I don't see the interaction. I told you: I don't have a full life. I am not a fully developed human being,, in the terms of the world that we live in. Otherwise I don't feel anything is wrong with me.

KDJ: What do you think is missing in your life?

LW: If I knew, I would do it. I'm serious: I have no idea whatsoever.

KDJ: But you do have this feeling, that it's incomplete?

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: In terms of the people around me, no. I do social things out of social obligation. I think I should be supportive and if it's at all possible, I'll get there. I love cocktail parties. I adore them, because you can talk to a lot of people about a lot of things. And you don't end up sitting next to them and have dinner. But I really like cocktail parties, I eat all the decorations. With these wonderful shrimps usually comes this wonderful parsley and then I'm a happy camper. But I don't know what it is I want. I like to work.

SG: How do you work?

LW: It's all very physical. It's materials, it's things. I don't have a working process. To draw, yeah, you have to stand at the drawing table and draw. The work comes from work. It's studio work. I don't know how I work, but it seems to work.

[Lawrence chuckles. Then a zooming sound.]

LW: That's just the water boiler. There is a leak and because of the leak the pressure goes down. And it doesn't really pay to have it fixed, because we have to rip it out anyway. I told you it's primitive. When anybody wants to take a nap: tell me! Then I will open that door and turn on the electric blanket, so you can lie on the bed without freezing to death. I am sorry it got so cold, but it's your fault with your Dutch passport. Not me.

[All laughing.]

LW: I am just a *gastarbeider*, I have no control over the weather.

[Sarah explains the reason why she was not able to go to the United States and do the project in New York. In the meantime, Lawrence pours himself another glass of whiskey. Lawrence tells about how things changed since 9/11. Then Sarah decides to go on the deck to look for the delivery guy.]

SG: I will go and have a look.

LW: *Het is wel koud boven* [it is really cold upstairs].

[Sarah goes upstairs.]

LW: I am very comfortable in Holland. People think I am South African, because of my accent. But other than that, people pay no attention to me whatsoever. I am surprised sometimes: they really do prefer to speak English to a South African than *Nederlands* [Dutch], because they are afraid of the misunderstandings. *En Afrikaans is helemaal niet Nederlands* [And Afrikaans is not at all Dutch]. *Het is een heel andere taal* [It is a completely different language].

[Lawrence lights his cigarette again and tells about one of his films. Then comes an anecdote about being a little famous in New York and people talking about you in the third person, while standing next to them. And about other famous people.]

LW: It's the *People Magazine* attitude: put them up on the top and then knock them down. That shows that even though you could never be them, they have a fault.

[Lawrence now whispers:]

LW: They are weak.

[Back in regular voice:]

LW: I don't like straight people. I don't like that the artworld is now taken over by all these straight, family people. It doesn't make sense to me. There are enough rich people who aren't straight who can support the artworld. Maybe you have to cut a little salary, but it would still function. And you don't have to put up with these stupid family people.

KDJ: Is it a love for art that they are missing? Or what do you think it is?

LW: I don't know. That was what I was trying to say in Utrecht: Why are artists expected to sit down and have something special to say about the world? Artists pay their taxes, take their kids to the dentist and have trouble with their relationships. Just like anybody else in the world. Do you think we can make it different?

KDJ: Well, you do seem to believe that you have made a difference.

LW: A difference, yes. But not different. It would be nice to try. But that's the problem, isn't it? I can't tell anybody how to live a life. Like I said, I'm not even a real person. I have designed programs for computers, but I don't even know how to turn one on anymore. It's all past the point that I don't really need to.

[Lawrence tells about email. Then Sarah comes back with bags full of food. All are excited.]

LW: You found him? You are kidding. I can't believe it worked.

SG: I didn't call. I just waited and it's wonderful to just stand there.

LW: It's wonderful! You can see everything.

SG: It's like a holiday there.

[Sarah tells about all the things she has seen. Lawrence coughs. Sarah puts the bags on the table.]

LW: I am absolutely impressed.

[Sarah gives Lawrence a peck to thank him.]

LW: Next time you want to go through customs, you can say you are married to my grandson. They don't know he is that young.

[While unpacking the boxes, the four speak about marriage and food. During dinner, they speak about Sesame Street. Lawrence tastes the Peshwari Nan and says:]

LW: Mmm, yummy!

[Lawrence walks to the kitchen to get napkins.]

KDJ: I'm happy you like it.

SG: At least it was worth waiting for.

LW: It wasn't that long, really. At least we put on a good performance, we looked like we were entertaining each other.

[Lawrence returns to the table with napkins. The four enjoy their dinner and talk about the delivery of the food, eating meat and about the food in various countries.]

KDJ: Is it for you interesting, about traveling, that you can learn or hear so many languages?

LW: You hear them, you don't learn them. You usually learn them after you've left. You remember things, and then all of a sudden after you've left, you figure out how to say something. And you didn't know you were so preoccupied with trying to say something.

[Lawrence puts another bit of food in his mouth.]

LW: It's really odd.

[He scrapes the last bit of food from his plate.]

LW: Do you think you are getting something of any value?

[Karlyn, with her mouth full, says:]

KDJ: I think so.

LW: If you want, we can make it more valuable. We have lots of time.

[All laughing. Sounds of cutlery.]

LW: We could make a Da Vinci Code.

[All laughing.]

KDJ: Do you have things lying here? Like pictures of your past?

LW: I will look. But there is no archive here. You cannot keep archives on boats. It's not like New York here, where the whole second floor is full of things. But we can have a look. My house is your house. If you do shit on the floor, just watch your feet.

[All laughing. They empty the boxes of food and talk about politics in India and the film *Slumdog Millionaire*.]

KDJ: Does it affect you, all these things that happen in the world?

LW: It affects me. Believe it or not. I have spent my entire adult life being embarrassed, affected and disgusted by what my own country does. My entire adult life. From Vietnam to Iraq to Kiev to Somalia. I am literally affected by all these things, but not enough to stop living. And not enough to know who's on first and who's on second. Who is guilty and not guilty. Iraq really bothers me. Afghanistan really confuses me.

[They finish the food on their plates and talk about Iraq, Afghanistan and Obama.]

LW: There are only two things you can do: kill a bull or fly a kite. You kill a bull and the European community looks down on you. You fly a kite and the Taliban will cut your arm off.

[And Lawrence mockingly adds:]

LW: Hurray!

[Then very serious:]

LW: There are no choices for children nowadays. There genuinely isn't and it is our fault. Because we put up with it all. We still talk to people you shouldn't talk to. You don't talk to them. I believe in shunning. You can shun. You just don't talk to them. Just stare. They used to do it in the middle ages, but for the wrong reasons. What else can you do?

KDJ: Lawrence, you just mentioned this movement. You have this drawing of a gesture.

[Karlyn makes a gesture.]

LW: It's called Conchita, after Conchita Cintrón, the female matador. It's the mark that kills the bull fast, which the European community doesn't want. It's not good, because there is no time for a commercial in between.

[Lawrence makes the gesture.]

LW: Turn it around and it flies a kite. But if you are in the wrong part of the world, as a kid, you just fuck yourself. But it's about grace. That's the piece I'm building for Castellon.

[Lawrence starts rolling a cigarette.]

LW: When we finished this all up, I will look at some things for you. I believe I just saw a box which should have photos inside. But no installation shots. Haven't you had enough of what I've done?

KDJ: No.

[All laughing.]

KDJ: I was wondering about this movement. Is that material as well?

LW: Of course: it's language.

KDJ: So, for you, movement is language too.

LW: How would you get from point to point? That has to be done reasonably intelligently. All the signs have a meaning.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: But it's not a universal meaning, it's a meaning. It really can't be adapted for different places.

SG: But if something's framed in, it has a certain meaning.

LW: Of course. It changes the material. You put the material in a box or you put it on a pedestal, it changes the materiality. And very often I change my mind about whether it should be 'pedestaled' for each different time. For whatever time and space it finds itself, that it exists correctly, I'll let it be. That's how it is. It's like a person: you present yourself in certain ways and you finally get it and you think it's right and you accept it. When you change it, you have to make it known that you change it. I change things all the time. It's nothing static. As long as the content is the same. As long as the stone remains a stone and it doesn't turn into a rose. I wouldn't know how to do that.

[All laughing.]

LW: It's not a bad idea, but I don't know.

[They clean the table and put some leftovers in the fridge in case they get hungry in the middle of the night. In the mean time they speak about recycling. When Sophia is in the toilet, Lawrence, Karlyn and Sarah talk about relationships and being egocentric.]

KDJ: You don't seem to be an egocentric person. You seem to share things with others.

LW: I am a very shy person, that's my problem. I am not modest: I know what I accomplished. I am just not sure of myself. *Ik ben een onzeker mens* [I am an insecure person]. But everybody who is an artist is supposed to be *onzeker* [insecure]. Because: what was fabulous on Tuesday... the world is going on, I mean somebody in another studio, in another part of the world and you really have to deal with it. That's part of your job. You have to pay attention to all of that.

[When Sophia comes back from the toilet, they continue speaking about washing up and allergy. They start doing the dishes and talk about the differences in luxury between the boat in Amsterdam and Lawrence's house in New York and being hypoglycemic. Lawrence makes coffee. Karlyn is interested in having some whiskey.]

SG: I read that you once said that when art doesn't change the values of our culture, it's not art, but art history.

LW: No, once it enters the culture and it has changed the values, it's history, it's not art. It's a silly analogy, but it's trying to find a place. It's banging against things. And that's what art is supposed to do. And when it finds a place, it's like penicillin: it works. It's not theoretical medicine, once it finds its place.

SG: Is there something specific you are able to convey with your art?

[Lawrence in a teasing voice:]

LW: Oh, we are back in talking about me again.

SG: A long time ago...

[Lawrence walks to the table and says:]

LW: Obviously.

[Then he walks back to the kitchen and continues:]

LW: I would love to say something about that, but things change. It's about changing value structures. I think the work that I made has allowed other people to be able to deal with the world in another way. That's as close as I can get to it.

[Karlyn goes to the toilet. Lawrence finishes something in the kitchen. Sarah tells Sophia a little story in Dutch about the grouping of her notes in her notebook. When Karlyn comes back from the toilet, she is a little confused because she accidentally flushed the toilet. She starts checking the recording and changes the battery of one of the recording devices. The coffee is on the stove. A conversation starts about the problems of people interfering with the translation of Lawrence's works.]

KDJ: Do you sometimes feel tired of talking about yourself all the time?

LW: I hate it and that's the God honest truth. It's the thing that drives me up the wall.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: That's why I don't like these talks, I'd rather participate in panels. Then there is a conversation about something. But what can I say? You obviously find it interesting enough to be sitting here.

KDJ: What are the things you would like to talk about?

LW: Anything.

[Then after a short pause:]

LW: I like your taste in underwear, by the way.

[Karlyn is confused and says:]

KDJ: Sorry?

LW: I like your taste in underwear.

[Lawrence and Karlyn laughing. Meanwhile, Sarah tries to get the attention.]

SG: I would like to see your reaction to the next couple of minutes.

[Sarah starts French kissing Sophia and then Karlyn.]

SG: What are your thoughts?

[Lawrence whispers:]

LW: How nice.

[Then in regular voice:]

LW: What am I supposed to think?

SG: You said you didn't like to talk about yourself all the time, so I thought I give you a little break.

LW: It's a nice break, but I don't know what my reaction is supposed to be.

SG: Anything.

LW: I am not going to fall into your little trap, however nice it may be. I am going to have some coffee instead.

[Sarah laughing. Then Sarah tells Lawrence her thoughts regarding the intermezzo. Lawrence fills the glasses with whiskey and they toast to their meeting on the boat. Then Sarah looks at Karlyn and, as if she wants to give the floor back to her, says:]

SG: Next question.

KDJ: No, I am still a little surprised about your sudden interaction. I don't know why you did that.

LW: I don't know why you left me out.

[All laughing. Sarah then gets up to French kiss Lawrence.]

LW: How nice.

[Sarah goes back to her chair.]

SG: I thought we cannot spend 24 hours together and then nothing happens.

[Lawrence lights a cigarette. He starts coughing and they speak about his health.]

LW: Everything is always *kaput*. It is a real tiredness. Do you know how many shows I've made in the last month?

[Lawrence takes a sip of his coffee.]

KDJ: You do have a very strong body, or at least you seem to have had.

LW: I did. And that makes it even worse.

KDJ: Because you are surprised by yourself, by your body, that you cannot do things anymore?

LW: I'm disappointed.

SG: When did it start to get worse?

LW: A couple of years ago. But I've been making too many shows. There's no solution to it in order to not fulfill one's social role. One then has to take on the assumption that one doesn't want to take on with the work. Like I said, it's not that interesting. It's fine. Except I got confused and I switched off the *geiser* [water-boiler]. That's upsetting me more than anything else.

[Sarah offers to do the dishes with cold water instead. Lawrence doesn't like the idea. He takes a sip of coffee.]

KDJ: Your work seems also about...

[Then she sees the faces of the others and says:]

KDJ: Sorry, I like talking about your work.

LW: I prefer to talk about the work.

[Relieved, Karlyn continues her question:]

KDJ: The work seems to be all about possibilities, that it can be in certain ways. Why is there such an openness towards filling it in? Why is that important to you?

LW: I feel that if there's no reason to close something off, why should you? And when you're lucky enough to figure out how to make art that is a little bit more open, because art itself has become such a closed circuit and such a closed off venue. If the work is open you don't have to have any false populism. You don't have to adapt the work. You don't have to dumb it down. You don't have to do anything. You can really present what it is, if it's open. And people can adapt it to their own abilities.

KDJ: If it is so open, do you feel people have enough to hold onto?

LW: No, some people don't and they will find something else that they want. I'm not trying to make a universal art. But if it cannot function for them in an open situation, then perhaps it's not for them.

KDJ: Do you think your work became more open over the years?

LW: I am the last one to know. That I could never know.

KDJ: For me personally the *OP HET OP* in your last exhibition is far more difficult than your early works.

LW: Because they were about things that everybody assumed that everybody knew about. But something like *BOVEN OP BOVEN HET WATER*, that did well in that public park. I sent in the stencil. There was no questioning, but they lived in a *polder* [land below sea level]. People in a *polder* live *BOVEN OP BOVEN HET WATER*.

[Sarah takes a few photos.]

KDJ: You have said that no special insight is being required for being an artist. How does that work with you being considered one of the people from the concept art movement?

LW: There's not much I can do about it. As long as I'm not an expressionist, I'm fine. Concept art doesn't mean anything. It's like wet swimming. Everything is a concept. The first time people noticed my work was in 1968, that's 42 years ago. If for 42 years I have been able to survive within it, I will survive within it until I die. We have to stop this constant chewing about whether it's this or that. After a while what you've made enters the culture in such a manner that there is no way to get rid of it. It obviously functions. It obviously has a place. Why don't we just leave it at that instead of constantly rationalizing and feeling we have to explain it to the butcher, the

baker and the candlestick maker? Very often the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker have no problem with it. What more do we want? What are we looking for? I'm not David Bowie, I don't have the body for it. If I had the body...

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: I don't know what we're looking for. I'm looking to place things in the world that have an immediate effect.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: And in the 70s maybe it took people a year or two to understand that it really was there. Not any longer. And the public is not my problem. As a matter of fact, I don't have a problem. My problem is to make each individual show and each individual work function. That's my problem. Not how it's going to be placed in the hierarchy of society. That's somebody else's problem. Some artists want their place in history, but what they don't realize is that once they participate, they are in history. The work is the thing that counts. I don't know. I know what is troubling you, but I'd like you to articulate it better. Go on. I am serious. It's for you to articulate better, it's not for me at this point to discover how to justify and rationalize what I am trying to say. There is no rationalization necessary.

KDJ: But you do want people to do something with your work or you do...

LW: They do it by trying to place it into their life. It functions as art. They try to fit it into their life. Or reject it from their life, make sure it doesn't bother them. What more interaction can you expect from other people?

[And after a short pause:]

LW: What do we want? I am serious. I really don't know where it is supposed to go from here. All I want is two simple things: being able to make a reasonable living and being able to place the work outside in the world, having venues to place the work. Maintaining the venues is very important to me. It means that as I'm working new things can be placed in with what somebody's idea of what I do is. Also I am in this incredibly strange dilemma of being an artist who made things, makes them public and some things that were made 40 years ago, if nobody tells them it was made 40 years ago, it functions today. That's very lucky. I take that as luck and that's not because of my skill why this or that, maybe this stuff was well made. Somehow it functions. What a compliment, to both: the one who figured out the form that's well functioning, the other for figuring out how to use it.

KDJ: So, what about this immediate effect or this immediate reaction?

LW: The essential reaction, the immediate idea. I get that from some people. Enough to make me realize that it works. I don't get it from everybody.

KDJ: But is that also why you...

LW: But my tongue in somebody's mouth might not bring about the same reaction as in somebody else's.

[All laughing.]

LW: My reaction might be to curl in and hang in there. Somebody else's might be to figure out what it looks like. They are both reactions, aren't they? I prefer to curl in and figure out what is going on.

[All laughing. Lawrence finishes his whiskey.]

LW: Please, do continue. Don't be put off.

KDJ: No, no, you are not rid of me yet.

LW: But don't be put off.

KDJ: Your work is often temporary. For example, the work you gave Sarah and me for our exhibition in Bregenz, Austria, will in a few weeks be painted over...

LW: So? Somebody saw it. It's not temporary, is it, if they remember it?

[The conversation continues about the exhibition in Bregenz. Karlyn and Sarah show some photos of the exhibition on the computer.]

SG: Of which artists could you say, you really feel respect for them?

LW: I can't give you a list. There's a problem with that. You give somebody a list of who you feel respect for and 20 minutes later you think: "Oh my God, I forgot her, I forgot him and I forgot this or that." It becomes crazy. Also naming a few is leaving other people out. I show with a lot of people. I even make things with a lot of people. That's my answer. Come on, isn't your life worth something? You don't always have to associate it. I am going to open the door for a second and let some air in.

[Lawrence gets up, walks to the back door and opens it.]

LW: Oh, the stars are so pretty tonight.

[Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia also walk to the back door. Together they look at the stars. Then Lawrence shows Karlyn his notebook and the things he put on the wall at the other side of the boat. After a moment, Sarah and Sophia join them. Lawrence goes into the bedroom to look for the box with photographs. He cannot find it, but instead he shows the three women several books and editions he made.]

LW: Would you like your life to end up this way? Would you like to end up on a stool like that? With little yellow stickers?

SG: ME!

LW: IT! It's not me.

SG: No... But IT written in capitals.

LW: I like capitals, they are easy to read. It's the way I write.

SG: No, but they have more meaning.

LW: No, they don't and they don't have any more power. They are easier to read and I can't read European handwriting. This double over-script, it is nonsense. The majority of new artists print. I don't know why, but they do print.

[Lawrence takes a little pot that has been standing next to him the entire time and then lights a cigarette.]

LW: It's easy to read. It's simple and you can hand it over to a working person and they can read the instructions. When you get block letters in any language, they are easier to read for everybody. Don't make a thing out of it. Please!

SG: Done.

LW: It's not a thing. I don't know where one goes from that. It's an odd situation, isn't it? I don't know. It's a weird life. Well, what do we do now? I told you I forgot to buy dope.

[He opens the little pot.]

LW: There is enough in here to get one little hit. We were out and passed the shop and then still I forgot about it. I remembered the whiskey. There was no more wine on board. I don't

know what happened to all the wine. I don't know how much we drank, because it all goes in the *bak* [bin] now outside. It became so modern.

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about being in the Arctic and having his own sauna. Then about Americans wearing bathing suits in the sauna and how Europeans now take over this behavior. Lawrence gets up to close the door. Sarah yawns.]

LW: You are tired.

SG: No, I am fine.

LW: We could think of ways to make it more comfortable and get covered up.

[Lawrence sighs and says:]

LW: But I don't have the desire to turn on things, but it is really getting chilly.

KDJ: You don't seem to be wearing a lot of clothes. Just pants, a shirt and a hemd.

[Lawrence opens his shirt.]

LW: It's a camisole. I am a little claustrophobic. I don't wear a lot of clothes, I'm not comfortable that way. I am not a big sweater person. I don't like wool against my skin. That's me. I have no reason for it, I'm not allergic or anything. I just don't like it. And wet wool? I go insane.

[Lawrence shows what he does when feeling wet wool against his skin.]

LW: Everybody's got their problem.

[The conversation continues about clothes and materials, about being cold and living in warm countries and Lawrence's retrospective in Basel, Switzerland.]

LW: Isn't that what they give you retrospectives for? To say goodbye.

[Someone pours water in the glasses.]

KDJ: Are you ready to say goodbye from the art world?

LW: No. While I'm alive, I might as well stay where I am. Are you ready to say goodbye?

KDJ: No, I am just at the beginning.

LW: Thank heaven for you that I am not ready to say: "Oh god, let's pack it all up and you and I run away to Jamaica." It won't work.

[All laughing.]

LW: I don't know what we are running for. Do you?

[Lawrence starts preparing a joint.]

LW: But making art is interesting. I am sorry, I just can't be off-hand or cynical about it. It is interesting. And it's one of the most honorable things you can be involved in. But I don't quite know about the structure you're involved in, it's like a doctor: you can save lives, but you are in the structure of a hospital, which is a business. That's the difficult thing. In art it is the same. You are in a structure that is a business.

KDJ: How do you deal with the business part of the art world?

LW: The best way I possibly can. I don't have a bad reputation in the business world. I do my job. I pay my bills.

SG: I think being reliable is also...

LW: I think it is something you do, because of who you are, no matter what the circumstances. Do you think being reliable is part of that? It's not good business. It's bad business as a matter of fact, because the art world runs on some sort of bourgeois exoticism. And the biggest pain in the ass usually gets the biggest piece of the pie. It doesn't mean they make the most work or anything, but for a certain time they get the biggest piece of the pie. And sometimes that piece can be rather large. Being reliable is often not a good thing. Being accessible is not a good thing. I just don't know if there is another answer. But it is my nature, so I might just as well follow my nature. I see it as my responsibility. Like I said, it's getting more and more difficult. It's always a possibility. It's just that after a while you are just on the plane to keep the structure going. It doesn't make any sense to me. Doing things to keep the structure going, doesn't make any sense to me at all.

[The conversation continues about selling art, people buying art and editions. More whiskey is poured in the glasses.]

LW: I'm making a show a month, minimum.

KDJ: That's a lot.

LW: And I like to make each show really important.

[They continue to talk about whiskey, BAK and Lawrence's program for the next month.]

LW: The whole idea is that you want to make something that goes out in the world. Then, all of a sudden you become this creature. And it has got nothing to do with what's going on. Okay, I would like to be friends. Yeah, just like that. And I am comfortable and all of that. But if you think about it, that has nothing to do with you at the moment. You are sort of a high-class whore at the mo-

ment. You become somebody's trophy wife in some way. They don't really want to know that maybe your feet hurt. They just want you to be their trophy wife. It doesn't matter whether the sex is good or bad, as long as everybody else thinks it's great. What a weird position to find yourself in. I know many people who are treated like that, the three of you are also treated like that: arm candy. In Hollywood everybody at least knows what arm candy is. Arm candy is somebody who's willing to do it for you or somebody you pay. They know exactly what they have to do, regardless of whether their feet hurt or they have a headache, they just go. It's all about them, it's not about you. It's such a nice feeling sometimes: you just have to stand there, you can listen to any conversation, you're just a trophy wife. It's places that if you went, you would have to be working. And here you don't have to be working. All you have to do is...

[Lawrence poses.]

KDJ: Look nice.

LW: Look nice and keep yourself a little bit together.

[All laughing.]

LW: It's such a nice feeling sometimes to become part of the world of the other. You must do it all the time.

KDJ: Yes, I noticed.

LW: But then you can't go like this.

[Lawrence poses while imitating Karlyn's look. All laughing.]

LW: No way! It's not allowed.

KDJ: Then I have to be very neutral.

LW: Yes, exactly.

KDJ: But if you do it too often, it becomes a little bit empty, because you have to throw away yourself completely.

LW: It is a little bit empty. Yes. But sometimes it's nice to throw away you and still be there. The other person has to know how to do it. I know and I am willing to do it, but can they do it? That means: no hands on the ass. That means that little things are just different.

[Lawrence winks exaggeratedly.]

LW: That is so Dutch. Dutch can't wink.

[Lawrence again winks exaggeratedly.]

LW: You see it and you think: "Oh god! And I thought this person was sophisticated."

[They continue to talk about being arm candy.]

LW: It's how you attack things. That's interesting. How you approach making work. The approach matters. That's why this thing of being somebody, who everybody thinks they know what they are, has nothing to do with the making of art. It's very odd, it's how you walk into things. Literally, how you prepare to go into it. If you go into it with any preconceived social role: you're going to make this work, you're going to put it together, it takes a lot of setting up. It looks so simple, but it takes a lot of setting up. Then there is a moment where, if you're lucky, you can do it in a day or two. If you are really lucky, it can only take an hour. But you spent all the time still collecting other things, putting things, making notes, doing this, doing that. Sometimes it just happens. I was hoping the three of you would inspire me, that I would be able to do the goddamn show in Lisbon. I have not been able to do it.

I work extremely well from drawings and photographs, I really do. I have this funny sense of place. I really don't need the ambiance, I don't even care about the ambiance. It's not site specific. It's all about finding a work that is in dialogue at that particular moment with the world. But not *hedendaags* [contemporary] it's not about that. It's about finding a basic, universal problem. Asking a universal question in a way that once people realize it's a question, they can answer it in relation to themselves. Instead of the imponderable which makes you into this mystic artist. No, ask the question in a way that it looks complicated, but then yet somebody reading it or looking at it or seeing, feeling, or knowing it, they basically can make an answer for themselves. And then it doesn't much matter what the answer is, does it? Then, the work is successful. And it becomes part of the place. And it's rather interesting to do that. At least for me. And it's a privilege to be able to have this conversation with the world. Then you really can do anything, but no kissing. That's Utrechtsestraat [red light district]. That's your regular hooker. That means anything, but no kissing. So, take it as a compliment that kissing is okay. For such a high-class whore, you know. It's very rare.

SG: I feel honored.

LW: Now I am supposed to judge who is the better kisser.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: That's interesting. And not tell. Anybody?

[All laughing.]

LW: I like to bet. This is the most interesting part of the conversation. You are totally honest and on the top of the table. Otherwise, you would have gone about and made some sort of strange *vergadering* [meeting], that we would all sit around and have this discussion.

[Lawrence sighs and says:]

LW: We saw that with *UTOPIA STATION*. But you are not doing that. You're saying: "Ah, we are going to center on the *levende pop* [living puppet] and we are going to deal with it that way. We are going to focus on that as if it was a sort of social object." It's interesting. That is what interested me, because usually it would be the excuse to all sit around and talk about a subject, which of course ends up with everybody saying *volgens mij* [according to me] tada-ta-da-da... and two and a half hours later the other one says: "Ja, maar *volgens mij*..." [yes, but according to me...].

[All laughing. Then Lawrence says to Karlyn:]

LW: You are Dutch Dutch.

KDJ: Yes, I am Dutch Dutch.

LW: You are Dutch Dutch. I know. That's part of your attraction.

[Lawrence now turns to Sarah and says:]

LW: You are not Dutch Dutch at all. That's part of your attraction.

SG: No, I am Dutch, English, Russian, Indonesian...

LW: Yeah, you are not Dutch Dutch.

[Lawrence turns to Sophia:]

LW: I don't know you. I didn't figure you out yet, but you are pretty Dutch Dutch.

ST: I think so.

LW: I think so too, but I am not sure.

[Lawrence directs back to Karlyn.]

LW: Her I am sure of.

KDJ: Me too.

LW: Down in the core.

KDJ: For the last 300 years, at least, no other influences.

SG: No mixing.

LW: No, it's not about mixing. It's not blood I am talking about. It's something else. It's another kind of thing. The only thing you are really lacking as a Dutch Dutch is: you don't have a *wipneus* [tip-tilted nose].

[All laughing.]

LW: You have a nice nose, but it's not a *wipneus*. *Het is waar* [It's true].

[Karlyn blushes.]

LW: Oh, I can make you blush. That's not bad.

KDJ: Yes...

LW: Sometimes I think you think people don't notice things, but people do notice things. They notice what you are doing, they know what designer you choose. They do notice things, they honestly do.

[Lawrence makes a pose.]

LW: It doesn't work. They still get through it.

KDJ: I was also just listening. I look serious then...

LW: Oh yes, I know.

[Lawrence picks up his glass.]

LW: With some of those photographs you knew damn well there was a camera on you.

[All laughing.]

LW: I am sorry. I am looking at raw material and I like gestures and movement. That's why I notice things. And when I find it interesting and attractive to watch, I look.

KDJ: That's good, right?

LW: Yes it is.

KDJ: So, what is your next film going to be about?

LW: Perceptions. It's called *DIRTY EYES*. I can't put it together. I'm having practical difficulties bringing it together. It's not about money. That doesn't matter: I will just start. I have a good producer and a great cameraperson. I will just start shooting it. But I can't get the ambiance straight to start. Once the ambiance comes together, I am capable of taking quite complex things and dealing with them, quite simply. Maybe I am stupid, but I don't know they are complex. Like: it wasn't that hard to make a porn tape. There were no problems, that means it is possible. The only thing that somebody has to say that is wrong with porn, is exploitation.

[Lawrence continues with anecdotes about the reception of his film.]

LW: I don't make things to provoke. I make things so integrated in the structure, that they become normal. Do it as gracefully, as beautifully, as wonderfully as you possibly can. And then, if there's a problem, you know that the society is genuinely cancer. There's something genuinely wrong with it. Most societies are just as bad as anything else. There is not something desperately wrong with it. They may not like it, but they say: "Please, I don't want it any-

more." But nothing happens. You are not trying to win an election or win friends. People who support art are doing it because they get something from art that enriches their existence, their insight. The artist gets the money to buy the one most expensive thing in the world: time. That's a pretty fair deal. Because if the artist buys time with it, and not furniture, they continue to make things that will continue to enrich these other people's worlds. And in contemporary art, you don't have to own it to see it, so basically you want it as part of your world, and if you have money you are responsible to participate. That's the ideal. And it's not a bad ideal. It really isn't. That's the whole point of the operation: to build up a relationship with the society that actually your criticism is not that you know better, but it's a criticism because the thing stinks.

[Lawrence tells about the radio program in France.]

LW: We've got our values all mixed up. We've got everything completely fucking confused. We think that class carries with it position. Class carries with it nothing but class. And at this point that is all it is. It's a privilege.

[Lawrence tells about how Holland was a different place in the 70s.]

KDJ: What kind of values would you like to bring back into society?

LW: A little bit of *joie de vivre* about the material world. Somebody paints a wall and they can say: "Not bad."

[All laughing.]

LW: Why not? It won't hurt anybody. That's what I want with art. The greatest joy I get in the world is when somebody enters an exhibition and goes on: "What is this shit?" and then all of a sudden you hear this strange "Oh, I get it." They may like it or they don't like it,

but that to me is the greatest joy. It's that moment of awareness that you too can understand the world. Then you can reject it or accept it, but you too are capable of understanding it. It's not just for them. I'd like to have a world where one's mother doesn't look at you and say... when you tell them what you are going to do with your life and you are a kid and they say: "You are going to break your heart" and to ask: "Why?" And they say: "Art is just for women and rich people." My mother said that to me. It's pretty kinky.

[They speak about becoming older, about smoking and the pleasure of the success of other people in society. Lawrence gets up to make it warmer in the room. When he is back at the table, they speak about the boat and having a day off to read magazines.]

KDJ: You have so many things to do and so many obligations, how much time do you have left to do free work? To just work for yourself without anybody desiring a result?

LW: You mean things I am interested in that are not covered by that? When you are in a relationship, you wait until the other person falls asleep. You slide out and you work for a while and then you slide back in. You don't mention it. That's why the planes are so nice: people don't talk to each other in business class and you don't have telephones.

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about an experience he had in a plane.]

LW: That block of 3 or 5 hours, you are totally free.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

KDJ: Do you feel locked up in your own life sometimes?

LW: Don't you?

KDJ: I do.

LW: Doesn't everybody? That's the whole problem: if you're feeling it, you're not a crazy person. As a general rule, everybody else feels it too.

KDJ: But I think you want to have a certain freedom, you want to choose your own things in life...

LW: I don't think I'm particularly looking for freedom. I really must say, maybe I've gone mad. I like to work. I like to concentrate on what I'm working on. And not worry so much about everything else. I am one of those people who feels obligated and you end up worrying about everybody else. That's all. That's me.

KDJ: Do you worry a lot?

LW: So it seems. But: when you see a good exhibition, aren't you glad?

KDJ: Yes.

LW: So, what am I supposed to say? Come on, it's not so serious. But there are times in your life that you really realize that your work is about self-realization rather than gratification. Some people are quiet people. And some people are this kind of people. And if they can't function the way they do, they don't get it done correctly. They begin to make little mistakes. Mistakes are no fun. Mistakes are not good.

KDJ: Do you feel you make a lot of mistakes?

LW: No, I don't make a lot of mistakes: I catch them. I'm always afraid of making mistakes. Because it does affect other people. It doesn't matter whether an artist is wrong or right, but still you don't want to make a mistake. You may universalize it, it's not just about being an artist.

KDJ: Do you feel that you are in that sense a perfectionist?

LW: No, I just don't want to make a mistake. There is a difference. Okay, maybe when you've reached a certain point in your life, more

people pay more attention to what you do. More people realize that you made a mistake. But I don't really care if I made a mistake. Hey, I fucked up, let's do it again. But I don't really feel I have the time. I like being engaged in the things I'm engaged in. But if I make a mistake, I want to move on to the next one. That's rational, isn't it? I don't know how to justify things. I don't know what it's all about anymore. I do know that I feel very positive change in the art world. That it's going to require an enormous amount of work. I have been through an enormous amount of cusps in the art world. I'm not going to be enthusiastic about the next cusp. I don't know whether I want to go through another revolution. Do you know how many I've been through since the 50s? The whole basis and value structure of art, and I've been part of it. They are still dancing to the same rock 'n roll. I sure as hell wouldn't mind learning how to dance to another rhythm. That's the problem. I wouldn't mind. Whether I would succeed at it or not, is a whole other question. What is the revolution? What is our goal? What are we doing?

[The four talk about their goal in the society.]

KDJ: Is there a revolution you are looking for?

LW: I am loosing the goal and the goal for me is, doing my best to break open perceptions of things and things that were considered complicated and turn them into something that is really understandable and usable to people. That is something any decent educator or person does. In making the stuff, I think that's where the problem is. There is very little attention paid to what is the making of something and much more attention is paid to the reception of what something is. The reception is a necessary part of your existence, but the making of it, is something else. That's another ball game.

KDJ: You don't see the act of making them as a way of using?

LW: No. Making and using are two different things. The pleasure a person gets from a well-made piece of art is not the same pleasure the person who makes it gets. Basically, you have to know after they see it, they know enough to make it into something better. That's the openness. The making of it requires another kind of the problem. The artist is outside of it. It's like the baking of a croissant. The baking is very different than the appreciation of it. It doesn't matter if you dip your croissant in your coffee and whether your coffee has milk in it: you use it.

[Somebody pours water in the glasses.]

LW: The making of it is different than the appreciation of it. My problems are with the making of it. My day starts with that. I work mostly every day.

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about Duke Wellington.]

LW: The artist doesn't take part in society. The artist is taken for granted. The museum doesn't exist unless there are artists. The art school doesn't exist unless there are real artists out there, not practicing and studying. When I get up in the morning, I am usually perplexed about how to approach a certain thing. Because I am going to approach it with the hubris of who you are. I know who I am. I know what I have done and what I could do and all of that. But there has got to be another way. You have got to approach it in a way that when you make that first line, at least towards what you are doing, it doesn't much matter what you are doing, it doesn't carry with it all the things that made it possible for you to have this possibility to be doing it. That's odd. But that's real privilege: not to have to carry the authority with you when you begin. That's why I talk about these things. It's not about its reception, not about how it is accepted in the society and when it is accepted. How you

incept it! There is a difference between them, that's totally explicit. That's not implicit. We live our lives with our position implicit. We live our lives with our decisions implicit. In fact, they must be explicit and that explicitity must in some way, manner or form leave behind the things that have given you the privilege to be able to attempt to be explicit. And that's the paradox.

[Lawrence pauses for a short moment.]

LW: It's an odd paradox. That's why I see it as X and XY and things like that. How do you deal with this? It has nothing to do with what the society says is female or male. It has to do with the approach towards it. It's what you carry with you when you make that first line. Because that determines the whole body of what you're going to accomplish that day. And each person really does only work day by day. You can't have a good day and a bad day. You can feel like shit or not feel like shit, but you can't have a good day or a bad day because it's going to carry to the next day and the next. It's the domino theory. You wanted a conversation. That's your conversation. That's my concern. And I don't have an answer. Maybe I am not supposed to have an answer. But I do have a question every morning. That's why I don't like to interact with people on days when I try to work. Not because there is any wrong with them, but because their syntax requires me to accommodate their syntax. And the society doesn't require them to accommodate my syntax. Unless I play the *grande dame*. You already lost then: the diva never gets to whistle and maybe whistling was necessary that day. Yeah, okay. That's the use of syntax. It's really all about syntax. That's why I really don't like *Jip en Janneke* baby talk: it doesn't allow other people to have another syntax without being called: "Oh, look at that. They are that kind of person." No, syntax is syntax. Contemporary art requires another syntax. "Wow" is okay in about any syntax. But that is about it.

And how do you determine that syntax? And how do you maintain it? And how do you stay polite to somebody who will not be polite to you and not giving you the dignity of having a syntax? Most artists that function, function in nouns. They use nouns as if they were verbs. Most people don't notice it, because they are very socially oriented and outer-directed, but in fact, if you really want to talk about art, you have to take nouns that are functioning as verbs. Most people don't want that. You can't: "Bagel me."

[All laughing.]

LW: I'm serious! "Coffee me." That would be the correct syntax for somebody trying to make something. Because that's all they're interested in at that moment: them and coffee. It's a simplified thing. That's why I like talking to children, their syntax is so much more open.

[Lawrence tells about the syntax of children and Rudolf Steiner.]

LW: Art is about somebody noticing a structure. Anyplace you put it into the world and let it adapt into its situation, it's an insight in how things work.

[They talk about wine, oysters and the fashion industry and drink more water and whiskey. After some time, Karlyn says:]

KDJ: Shall we prepare the beds? I'm getting tired.

LW: You are marvelous to be with: you get hungry, you get tired. I like that. I am too socially fucked to say what I feel like.

[Lawrence to Sophia:]

LW: You are too shy.

[And to Sarah:]

LW: You are one of those Hell's Angels types. You will just keep pushing it, keep pushing it, keep pushing it...

[All laughing.]

LW: It's true, isn't it?

SG: Yes. It's like: I am tired, but I cannot give in.

LW: I know that. And I am too socially fucked to say: "I'm going upstairs, lock the door and then we ought to figure out a way to continue the conversation in a different position, maybe lying down or something. And then we will set lots of little clocks and wake up early and continue talking, because you only have until 12." I charge extra after.

[All laughing.]

SG: Shall we get the mattresses from the other room?

LW: I am a little nervous about that. It's too cold in there. I could even... I don't know. Are we going to continue talking or are we just going to turn in?

KDJ: I am fine either way.

LW: Yes, but is it going to be a pajama party or is each person going to curl up in their little place and go to sleep? That's all I'm asking, because I don't know people. I don't know you.

SG: I think it's more a curling up and going to sleep time.

LW: Okay, that's the way it is. Then I will go upstairs and lock the door and see what we can do about all of this.

[They look at the couch on the opposite side of the boat. While Lawrence goes upstairs to lock the door, Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia get the two sleeping bags. When Lawrence is back, the four fold the couch

open. It appears to be a one person bed. After that Sarah gets a mattress from the other room. Sophia brushes her teeth. Lawrence and Karlyn have a private moment. Later the four decide who is going to sleep where: Sophia on the mattress in front of the stove, Karlyn on the couch, and Sarah and Lawrence in Lawrence's bed. Before going to sleep, they join together at the table again and talk a bit more.]

LW: Don't worry about having to use the toilet during the night. There is more light once the lights go out than you think.

[Lawrence takes his package of tobacco.]

SG: I will have a cigarette.

LW: You want one?

SG: Yes, please.

LW: There is a little bit of dope, if somebody wants a joint.

KDJ: I haven't had it in years.

SG: I used to smoke a lot.

LW: Well, you roll your cigarette and we'll see what we have left.

SG: I used to work in a coffee shop.

LW: Oh, if you worked there, you probably roll a better joint than I do. I make them just simple and smoke them. I like dope every once in a while. We'll see what we can do.

[Lawrence starts making the joint.]

LW: It's so different from the New York dope.

SG: Dutch weed is very strong.

LW: It's not strong, it's more chemical. The stuff I smoke in New York is a little stronger. But it's not chemical. It's strange. I don't know what it is. The guy who invented skunk used to live next door, when the boats were still all tied together. He was in one of my movies.

[They drink more whiskey, smoke their joint and continue talking about weed, the project, the boat and art for another 40 minutes. Then it's bedtime. Lawrence puts on a blue LED light. Sophia goes to the toilet. Sarah and Karlyn talk for a few more minutes. Together with Lawrence, they decide to wake up the next morning at 9 am. Sarah goes to the bedroom. Lawrence joins Sarah in the other room a little later. Sophia and Karlyn undress themselves. Then Sophia goes to sleep. Karlyn checks all the sounds, goes to the toilet and then gets into her sleeping bag. For the next seven hours, Sarah, Lawrence and Sophia are quiet in their beds. Karlyn is awake almost all night. At a certain point, she gets out of her sleeping bag to put all her clothes back on and then slides back in. After some time, she goes to the toilet. On her return, she checks the computer and recording devices. Then she goes back to bed to try to get some sleep. Around 7 am, also Karlyn is sleeping.]

THE FOLLOWING MORNING

[The sound of coffee being ground and people brushing their teeth. Karlyn changes the batteries of her recording systems. Lawrence is making coffee. Sarah, Sophia and Karlyn are at the table and have a talk in Dutch. Lawrence comes to the table with coffee mugs.]

LW: Does anyone have milk in their coffee?

KDJ: Yes, please.

SG: Yes, if you have some milk.

LW: It will not be the greatest coffee, but it will be coffee at least.

SG: It sounded and smelled very nice, with the ground beans.

LW: The only way to make coffee beans possible to use, is to grind them.

[Lawrence chuckles. Then he puts coffee on the table.]

LW: I never had these beans.

[Lawrence pours the coffee into the mugs. Then he goes back to the kitchen.]

LW: I am only used to making coffee for two people.

KDJ: Then it's very difficult to do it for four.

LW: Especially, when everything is only made for two.

[Lawrence returns to the table.]

LW: So, we did not freeze to death.

KDJ: No, we are still alive.

LW: It's amazing. I should put some clothes on.

[Sarah pours milk in the cups. Lawrence starts rolling a cigarette. Lawrence asks Karlyn to take out one of the statements he gave the day before and change it into another.]

KDJ: Yesterday evening you told us that you start each day with questions. What kind of questions do you start with? What are the questions you're thinking about at the moment, this morning?

LW: With Lisbon I have this problem of adaptation. About what do we do when we deal with materials, in order to be able to understand them or use them? And I start to figure out essentially a way that I can tell myself about adaptation. That's where some of the drawings come from. Those are the questions. They are really not very profound.

[Lawrence starts coughing.]

LW: They're really not very profound. Or what to wear that day.

KDJ: Well, that can be a very important question. But, is adaptation an important issue for you?

LW: Yeah, I did that whole body of work years ago. Then I found out about *ALTERED TO SUIT*, because things essentially are altered to suit. And the whole concept of the level of adaptation, what the interactions with either the expectations or the society are, are extremely important to me.

KDJ: But also your work seems to be adaptation: you seem to adapt to the space in which you...

LW: No, that's the installation. Let's try to keep it straight. Let's not worry about consecutive things. The whole point is, that it's just

means to place it in the public. It has very little to do with the work itself. Its nature allows it to install it on a wall. Again, if you're going to install it on a wall, you might as well try to get it right. It's true. Our society, it tells us we should put on clothing, also the weather, then you might as well just get it right. And that's all it is. And then you realize that what you do has political implications, there's social implications and there's other things. And you try to deal with it. That's not to me a problem. This part of the job, it's not an easy part. It's supposed to look simple, but in fact that's something else. That's part of the job and you can't complain about it. You didn't snore, by the way.

SG: Thank you.

LW: Why 'thank you'? What's wrong with it?

SG: I'm happy. I've had this snoring complex ever since.

LW: I started to burp at some point. And then I had this incredible vision of: "Oh my god, in the middle of the night she is going to wake up and I am going to fart." Then this social pressure.

[All laughing.]

LW: "Gee, I'm going to fart and I will never have her in my bed again."

[All laughing.]

LW: I mean, the adaptation of how you essentially are going to put materials together. Because it's not haphazard, I wish it were. And I have a problem: I am pleased with the things I end up showing, or else I wouldn't show them. I mean if I have a show, I don't have to do it, I could also cancel. But I don't like moving them from one place to the other and I haven't, there was a point in the adaptation to put it in one show, but it wasn't made for a show, really. It was made because I had the opportunity of the show. There is a

difference. I've been very upfront about it with everybody, that it's made special for them. It's special because they ask me to make something for something. And I would use the materials of what's around. So, if it's in a coal mining area, I might try to be interested in coal or steam or whatever they use to make the machines work. But that's not really site-specific.

SG: Where do you think your interest in material comes from?

LW: The same as everybody else's. I have to walk across the earth. If they would have given me the opportunity to fly, I might've been interested in air. Which is immaterial too. I have no idea where it comes from. Do you? You're supposed to insight me.

[Lawrence points to Sarah:]

LW: She is supposed to make it possible for me to continue making art.

[Then to Karlyn:]

LW: She is supposed to make it possible for me to continue the things I might just get away with being able to exist.

[And to Sophia:]

LW: And you are supposed to make everybody feel that without you they couldn't do it. Is that true? Isn't that the way everybody basically functions?

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: I felt we were very old people last night, didn't you?

KDJ: In what sense? Because we went to bed early, or what?

LW: No, because we were sleeping in one place and you were sleeping in another place.

KDJ: If you would've had the choice, would you rather had us all together in the same bed?

LW: I had no thought, I honestly didn't as a matter of fact. I was just really a little embarrassed that it was not more comfortable for you. And I didn't know how to arrange it. But essentially? I hate to say it, but when she falls asleep, she's the same as you.

[All laughing.]

LW: It's just another nice, warm body. Let's be honest about life.

[Sophia, Lawrence and Karlyn are laughing.]

LW: Ah, you don't like that.

SG: Oh no, I totally agree. I know what you mean.

LW: There is a pleasure principle in working together, but there is no titillation, is there? The titillation is for people outside: free zone is free zone. You know, free zones are quite normal.

SG: What is a free zone exactly?

LW: Free zones are when there's a little bit of electricity between people. That's really quite normal. It ceased being normal, when people became very professional. When affection became a commodity within the art world. Friendship became a commodity. You used to work together with people you didn't even like, it didn't matter. And vice versa. I have to put some clothes on.

[Lawrence puffs his cigarette.]

LW: Don't ever put on weight, you don't know what to do with yourself.

[Lawrence takes another puff.]

LW: Life is really odd.

KDJ: You have said that a number of times...

LW: Yeah, I'm feeling it very odd lately. I feel like a distance. It's because they did a show and a public talk, and I have to get on the plane to do the same thing next week. It's the dedication to the children's project. And the kites.

KDJ: It's going to be a three-dimensional, public installation, isn't it?

LW: It's a public piece, it's permanent. And it's really rather large and it's very low, it's only a meter high [3.3 feet]. And there is a tower, you can see it from the tower. How are we doing with the coffee? I will make some more, just let me finish my cigarette.

[Lawrence finishes his coffee.]

KDJ: So, mainly the questions that you have are related to your next show?

LW: Well, yesterday you asked me about spending all this time talking about myself. When you then find yourself in the middle of the night, no matter how many people are in the bed, you end up feeling alone. It's about things I do not really have; I don't know what to think. That's why I said that life is odd. I don't quite know where I fit into it.

KDJ: Do you feel lonely sometimes?

LW: Working? Yeah. Surprisingly, there have been periods when you feel less lonely. When you feel that what you are doing well, you know it's going to work, then it's making some change to somebody, but you don't feel that much of a mosh around you. It's about a mosh really. I don't have a lot of fears and things, so it's not about *angst* [fear] or anything. *Willem is niet bang* [William is not afraid] that's the strangest song in the whole world. *Hup, daar is Willem met de waterpompang... want Willem is niet bang.* [Hey,

there is William with the pipe wrench, 'cause William is not afraid] living on a boat, you understand what they have to be afraid of.

[All laughing.]

KDJ: Do you feel lonely also, when you're alone, working? Or is it more the loneliness that you feel when you are...

LW: It is when you stop working. It's when you reach others. Also: there is a change to one's relationship to the world. I am objectified. I am an object. I always politically say: "You are supposed to be an object, not the subject and ta-da-ta-da-da." But you are a person and you have a subjective reality.

KDJ: When do you feel you became an object?

LW: That's been my problem somewhere in the 70s. I didn't do it. I never said I was. But in the 70s, something I did, crossed the line. Once that crossed that line, you can't even feel that you are a polite person and that everything will be fine. It all changes. It's going to take me a couple of minutes to wake up. I'm sorry.

SG: No problem.

LW: I mean, to find you something to eat. I'm not a big breakfast person. That's the advantage of smoking.

[All laughing.]

LW: I will make fresh coffee and I will cover this body, more or less.

[And after a short pause:]

LW: Thank heaven it's not a video camera.

KDJ: Yes, we are happy about that too, I guess.

LW: Oh, I don't know. You are really speedy this morning. You are like me: you don't wear that much, so it's not that big a problem.

[To Sarah:]

LW: And you are just a pro.

[And to Sophia:]

LW: You I just can't figure out.

[All laughing.]

LW: I'm serious. I feel like that Mormon television program. The poor guy: he is not that much of a pig as he is supposed to be, because he spends his time figuring out what the hell is going on in the other person's head. I do like that part of that where he goes to his friend who is a doctor and says: "I can't see." And the doctor says: "You can't take that much Viagra."

[All laughing.]

LW: Have you ever taken it?

SG: Yes.

LW: Did you like it?

SG: Yes.

LW: I had one pill once in my life and it never did anything, so I never took it again, because I know two people who were losing their sight. Really, like clouding over and things like that.

KDJ: That's terrible.

LW: I think their relationship would have been terrible if they hadn't, so, everybody's got their own problems.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: The problem is that our society has reached a point where, in fact, that's the problem with art. We begin to use our desire for things, because we feel so completely out of it, so completely not related. I am relating it to something that has to do with people. There is a desire, but there is no way to figure out what it's supposed to feel like or look like, so of course, it's never really satisfying.

[Lawrence takes a sip of coffee.]

LW: That after a while it won't be there anymore, you are more intellectually interested than physically. That's interesting with art. Art has become this problem where it's much more about the intellectual necessity, then it's more a social necessity. It's this *vergadering* [conference] thing, where people have to say something that has to do with something. It's so much easier when you say: "Let's talk about time." Or talk about green. And say you're talking about art, what are you talking about? And talking about yourself: the kind of work that I make, you cannot really think much about yourself. You have to step aside and you have to do it all totally synthetic, because the work doesn't allow for your personal feelings to come into it. It really doesn't.

KDJ: You mean, specifically your feelings?

LW: Yes, mine. That's all I know. I don't know how other people work. Or why.

KDJ: What I understood yesterday, is that you do want certain people to react upon it.

LW: I want anybody to react upon it. But then you are a human being: there are certain people that you prefer if they would react

upon it. But it's anybody. As I said, I am really happy when some hunter comes in with his family to the museum, only because they feel they should go to a museum. And then they find themselves perplexed by something. Anybody's work. And they say: "Oh, I get it." That's a luck, a pleasure principle.

[Lawrence puffs his cigarette.]

LW: It leaves you in these strange states.

KDJ: What do you mean with 'these strange states'?

LW: It's this state where you find something and have to find out how to make my own work relate to me. Because you find yourself that day thinking in other terms and you don't really want to be somewhere. But it got you there and now what do you do?

KDJ: Is it some sort of feeling of alienation from the work that you do?

LW: Each time it's finally finished, yeah. I have to re-adapt to how am I going to let it function. Because of course, you want to let it function. Because you made it for other people to function with. You have to decide what you are going to change in your attitude and things like that.

KDJ: Is it for you easier with the work you made in the 70s?

LW: I don't remember. Honestly and truly. This is what the problem was when I was writing to you, that I don't know what we are supposed to be discussing: I don't really remember how I felt in the 70s and the 80s. I remember what happened to me. I remember a lousy hotel or a good hotel, and I remember I felt fine when I went to install. But I don't remember the impetus at that moment. I am very outer directed as a human being. The world changes so radically, that I don't know.

KDJ: Does that mean you have feelings about the work that you do at this very moment?

LW: No, I have feelings when it's finished. I don't really have feelings before it's finished, because otherwise I will be altering it to suit.

[All laughing.]

LW: It's true. Whatever I will be doing, it will be a point in the adaptation of what has fallen into place. I know that sounds very pretentious. It's not that it's automatic, but you really do have to follow what you're doing straight through and give it its dignity and then say: "No, I reject it." So basically, you have to throw the whole project away and start again, if you really cannot accept it. Or you find yourself doing something that you realize will be used against what your core beliefs are. And we all have core beliefs. You didn't realize it at the time, because it wasn't something you wanted, it's just that the material itself led to it.

KDJ: What are your core beliefs?

LW: That the work can be used to propound certain things. That's the political thing. That's the responsibility of the artist. And it's a legitimate responsibility. That the work will not be used in a manner that you probably don't approve of.

KDJ: Do you feel more responsible when you make work for a specific group of people, like now with the children project?

LW: No, it's always the same. I don't have a nice, nice thing about children. I just find it sort of interesting to talk to them. Not in any depth. I don't look to children to make you feel good: you can always feel good, because children are always a pain in the ass. So, when you are nice to them, you can always feel good about yourself anyhow. It's a win-win situation: you are nice to them, they feel

a little bit better about themselves. It's a win win and if you are going to make a big fuss out of it, you are looking for credit. You're not supposed to get rewarded for doing the right thing. And you have to believe, that maybe you're going to get punished for doing the wrong thing. You have to keep it within some sort of reason. No, don't make a big thing out of the fact that I make editions for children. It's another part of the society, but don't expect anything or else you're going to end up with that expectation that bourgeois parents have, that the child becomes a reflection of you. That one, I know, ain't fair. And it probably ain't a good idea. And I am going to make some more coffee, before we all die.

[Lawrence goes to the kitchen to make more coffee. Sound of coffee beans being ground. Karlyn joins Lawrence in the kitchen to brush her teeth.]

LW: That's a good idea.

KDJ: I think so too.

LW: I can get away with it, because I smell of cigarettes anyhow. So, it doesn't matter.

[All laughing. Sound of Karlyn brushing her teeth. Sophia and Sarah pack one of the sleeping bags. Karlyn also comes to help to collect all their things and prepare to have everything packed for when they have to leave at 12 am. Lawrence comes back to the table.]

LW: One more cigarette and I will get dressed.

[Lawrence rolls his cigarette.]

LW: That was very odd. Wasn't it strange to be married to somebody dressed up like Elvis Presley?

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: In Las Vegas? Didn't you think it was like Las Vegas when you were waking up? What if I cut myself in two?

KDJ: I am happy.

LW: I am so pleased. That's good. Yeah, me too. But...

[Lawrence sighs.]

LW: I don't know about tomorrow.

[All laughing. Water is being poured into the glasses.]

LW: At least we know she doesn't snore.

[They make jokes.]

LW: This thing about fear and trembling and *angst* as if that was the problem, I don't mean to be populist about this, that's why I'm so reluctant sometimes and why I can make jokes: don't you think it's just as difficult for anybody who does anything?

KDJ: Probably.

LW: Probably. I have no way of knowing; it's just that you sort of take it for granted that you might just be the same thing. So, they make such a big deal about it for artists, but it's part of the reason why you get paid.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: It's used to be a joke to explain to children why you don't want to be bothered or explain to someone what is going on. It is invariably a problem of making things, that there is essentially not the fear of failure, but the fear of not being able to engage.

KDJ: Do you mean that as in being excluded?

LW: No, not to be able to engage. You see alienation as a problem, but that's because you haven't made that decision to try to make art. Once you have made that decision, you're very much like a diagnostic doctor. Not to make a silly analogy, but you have absolutely no idea what you're going to find when you go into something. Artists used to feel very romantic and probably still do, I do as well. If you really carry what you're thinking, you can go mad in terms of the society: you don't fit in anymore. But I don't mean not fitting in as not being appreciated. It's not easy to not be appreciated. I mean, I've been a lucky person: I started a conversation and there were people to talk to. An awful lot of people started conversations as artists and nobody will talk to them. They get a little *subsidie* [subsidy] and they really are serious, but nobody wants to have a conversation. So I think what happened was, and that's where that term conceptual art and where it all came in, that there were people intelligent enough to realize that the profession was going to leave them left out sometimes. And in order to cover that, they began today to talk things to death. They began to rationalize things to death. That's the same reason why you start conferences, you will be sure that there will be somebody around to talk to. It's a hard one, isn't it? I don't think it was a good idea. I think, it's still one of those funny things where artists are supposed to take the risk, that what they do will engage the conversation and what they have to say about it.

[Lawrence puffs his cigarette.]

LW: I wish, if I hadn't had this interaction, this political activity as a child, I wish I were closer sometimes to the artists who really don't talk. You never see them in public; they never go out. The problem is that they then become gurus. I don't want to be a guru. I don't know how to balance it. I like engaging in a conversation about things, like the four of us. But I don't like engaging in a conversation

about me. Not because I'm a private person, because I really don't have a fucking idea of what I'm thinking today. I don't know how I feel now about this. You asked me about this evaluation, but you have no idea what you're supposed to say.

KDJ: But that could also be something. If you don't know what to say, you don't know what to say. That's also fine.

LW: You do know what to say, but you don't know how to phrase it. That's the problem. And that's the problem about installation. That's right back into the circle of the first question. Installation is: you do know what to say; you don't know what syntax to put it in. You have a political syntax you would like to hold to. You believe grammar means something. You also have an interaction syntax. And you may think that your relationship to the rest of the world means something. It goes on and on like that, doesn't it?

[Lawrence puffs his cigarette.]

LW: Those are all questions. But they are all questions you have to ask every day.

KDJ: Are they questions that for you require an answer, or is it just what keeps you going?

LW: They require an answer every day or every two days, but let's not dramatize all of this. But in fact: let's not demean it. This existential quest that artists have of finding a place for the work within the world for a dialogue. One has a tendency to overinflate it. But don't demean it. It's a balance thing. I don't feel I'm against the world, that I'm fighting the world. But I do feel that I'm in a situation where, if I don't get it right, the conversation will stop. And then you have to waste all this time to start the conversation again. And it wastes a lot of time. And it has nothing to do with this ad-

vancement of age and all of that stuff that you have less time. You really don't notice that, you really don't think that. If you have been in a relationship, you can always relate it to that: every intellectual is in a relationship with society. Where everything can get on your nerves that day and yet you know you only have three days together before the other one has to get on the plane. You end up schlepping around, while all you wanted was three or four hours for yourself. And when you're by yourself, all you can think about is this other thing. So, you have no idea of where you are or what you're doing. Why shouldn't that be the same problem for an artist? It's not about outside things that happen, it's about your own mentality and your own problem.

KDJ: Is that also the romanticism you were talking about?

LW: I think romanticism is when you decide you are an intellectual. It is a very romantic decision. I shall existentially be responsible for the decisions I make. Bullshit. But we really want to believe it, don't we?

[All laughing.]

LW: You don't get the whole full implications. That's what everybody thinks about everybody else. They don't get the whole full implications. You don't understand. It's not that you don't understand that he or she doesn't understand you. It's that they don't understand the full implications and yes, they are very good at what they do. But they don't get the rest of it. You have to believe that in order for you to do all the little bullshit you have to do, from the taxes to the forms to the other things. It's true. That's what I meant: it's all part of the human condition. That's why I really do believe that making art is one of the things that really should be integrated in our society. There has to be somebody who can ask questions. And not be the bitch. And still keep asking questions. It's a strange balance.

KDJ: You have said that your work is without metaphor. What do you mean with that exactly?

LW: That it doesn't mean anything other than that. That even if I know how to use it for something, I am not supposed to impose it on somebody else. Because that takes away the richness of the work. That's the Caspar David Friedrich thing from before: it doesn't matter what the work looks like, it's a matter of what the work portends. Portends not what the work pretends or what it acts like, what it says will happen. Once you will accept that existential responsibility, in fact, I really feel I have been saying the same things for 40 years and it's bothering me.

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about a friend of his.]

LW: You really, not romantically, think that if you do it well, it'll make you a better person. I don't think my work is going to make anybody else a better person. It's just going to make them aware of the responsibility for the wrong choices they are making. That's different, that's the anger part of it. I don't believe that I can change somebody's life. What I'm going to do is to confront them with the decisions they are making, concerning even their relationship to an ashtray. It doesn't much matter.

KDJ: Do you feel that has got something to do with ethics?

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

KDJ: With the feeling of good or bad?

LW: I'm not a religious person, as I said. I am not going to spend any time deciding whether there is a godhead or not. But do remember what the Jesuits always believed: ethica and aesthetica is the same word. "She walks with grace through the day." Ethica and aesthetica is the same word for a group of people who do believe in God.

[Lawrence takes a sip of his coffee.]

LW: There is no double meaning. You can say ethics, you can say aesthetics. It's the same word.

KDJ: Do you think your work is aesthetic?

LW: Oh, of course it's aesthetic. It's not in dialogue with dead people. It tries not to waste the time. You know, if somebody has figured out the cure for something, and it's working, move on. You might get an insight and make a better cure, but just move on. And if you have to give credit to somebody because he got it right, that's fine, isn't it? But if you base that what you're doing only on the fact that they got it right, I don't see the relationship. That's the major problem we are having with contemporary philosophy. You can't keep making things just to get credit. And in order to get the credit you have to associate it with something else, you will end up being the Japanese De Kooning. Which still means that you do make a very decent painting that makes sense, but it doesn't tell anybody anything they didn't know before.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

KDJ: Is that the morality that you are looking for? Did you want to give people the opportunity to think new things or to learn more?

LW: Maybe, for them to take... Everybody is in a different situation, and if you're paying attention, maybe to give them the tools that what they make could be more useful to you. Maybe it's not altruistic. Don't you think that if one can figure out this XX, XY, correctly, it would make your daily life a little bit more amusing? So, it's not about altruism, is it? That is at this point, what I'm caught in between. I'm desperately trying to figure out what the essence of a line is. What does somebody mean when they say: "Draws like a

man, draws like a girl." What do they mean exactly, when you are not sure what you are supposed to be meaning. You have a synthetic thing you tell yourself every day what you want to be, but that has nothing to do with what you are.

KDJ: Isn't it because you are in a certain way, that you make the things you make?

LW: That's for you to figure out, not for me. If I'm having difficulties, I know I'm very complicated to be around. If I find myself with really imponderable things, where I can't get an answer, but I am working towards it, I find the reactions of other people much nicer and you're really basically functioning better.

[Lawrence sips his coffee.]

LW: Or so it feels to me.

[The sound of a boat through the water.]

LW: Some boat going through the water.

SG: An icebreaker.

LW: No, somebody trying to get to work and not wanting to use their tram card, so they are taking the boat. Or they have to get their boat to a shipyard or something.

[Lawrence tells anecdotes about the boat and a car crash in California.]

SG: Do you still have problems because of your car crash?

LW: Yeah, here.

[Lawrence points to his throat.]

LW: I had to teach myself how to talk again. I had to do the whole thing and we didn't have any money for physiotherapy. I remember that two weeks later I had to be on a plane to Zurich and the

woman next to me had a mirror. I asked if I could borrow it. And I remember sitting there figuring out how the hell to put words together. It worked.

SG: You don't notice anything.

LW: You hear it because I talk a lot from back here.

[Lawrence points to his throat again.]

LW: Rather than from up front. Everybody has problems with everything: if you had a skiing accident, you walk differently.

KDJ: It is remarkable that someone who is so involved with language...

LW: What has language got to do with speaking?

KDJ: Maybe nothing...

LW: You're falling back into that pattern, that each thing has its own specifics. It doesn't. That's why it's so strange to make sculpture that can be told to somebody, without losing anything. "This on top of that" physically is language. You are showing somebody a sign. Speaking it, writing it, it's all the same, isn't it? It is not any different. We are repressed by it. And the thing that troubles me about smoking so much is that I have always been troubled that my voice has gotten so deep. Because it's a mistake that there is an authority there. I don't know where that came societally.

[Lawrence shows his notebook and tells an anecdote about the effect of a voice and using his voice in public.]

LW: It should carry. But in our society everything is read in a different way. We will never get rid of that, there is nothing you can do. I am so tired of subjective art. And yet, in order to make what you make, you basically have to be subjective with yourself. We've been talking for a

day, and we haven't been able to determine that difference between making something, showing something and being something.

KDJ: For you they are three different things.

LW: For me, yes, they are three different things. And I think in reality they are three different things.

[Lawrence takes a sip of coffee.]

LW: I cannot get it together this morning. We didn't drink a lot and it wasn't very strong dope. It was good though, because everybody got a little bit of sleep because of it. We got warmer though afterwards. Did you notice?

KDJ: I did.

LW: How genuinely odd. One began to appreciate the little corner of the blanket. It's been years and years and years since we were this cold on the boat. It's a remembrance of what it used to be like. Because it used to be really awful. For the last couple of years, maybe the climate was different. It's been so comfortable on the boat.

[They continue to speak about the cold in Holland.]

KDJ: Lawrence, can I ask you for the evaluation part?

LW: Why do you ask me if you are going to fucking do it anyway?

[All laughing.]

LW: I just love this.

SG: Just trying to be polite.

LW: We all went to Las Vegas, we all came back. We got our certificate, leave it be! You don't have to keep asking.

[All laughing.]

LW: May I brush my teeth? Darling my feet are cold, I am so sorry.

KDJ: You may not be able to put it in one way, but could you give an answer or three? What did you think of the whole 22 hours, so far?

LW: My god, is it 22 hours? Do we only have two hours for *opruimen* [cleaning up] and get it together? I don't know how you put the couch back. There must be a way.

[Lawrence takes a deep breath.]

LW: Let's put it positively first. For me, from my standpoint, because of having made these shows and because of lifestyle difficulties and things, it took me a little out of domesticity for a while. It took me out of the stream of life. Yes, so it cleared my head a little bit. And I realized that a lot of the questions I've been asking myself probably are unnecessary. But it brought up other questions about interrelationships and it put you back in a situation about what is now a common conversation about what constitutes commune, how do you constitute commune, it's all an attempt to develop a commune, either synthetic or why it's needed I have no idea, but it is. On that level it was okay. I don't know what you can get out of this. Maybe it's best to take out the *bon mots*. We were all trying so hard to be comfortable with each other, that we were not paying so much attention to form. It would be like a performing group or a rock 'n roll group that comes together for jamming. That's not a performance and once you put things in a book it's a performance. You do have an obligation to make that performance as professional, as dramatic, as interesting for other people. But we got too comfortable. That's the point. That's an interesting thing about this responsibility thing. Everybody wants to have fun when

they're working. But if you get too comfortable, you're forgetting that you're making this synthetic thing that's going to have to exist without people knowing that you were at that moment comfortable. The jazz is a good example: if you look at jazz musicians getting stoned together, they are just playing. Especially when they are totally different, it's really charming, but it ain't music. Music is something that when it's given, that when it's on a scratchy cassette and somebody hears it, it has the real function: it does something, it is something. That's what I thought about. That maybe it isn't that possible to be comfortable and work. There was no real discomfort. The only discomfort was the physical thing which we all have to deal with: the cold and, thank heaven, not the dark, because we fixed the light. That was my obsession: that it was just going to be so heavy because the light wasn't working.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: But the light was fine. It's a very nice space here to work. That was what I was thinking of as well. It was worth the difficulty of somebody finding another place to sleep and everything else not to get interfered with it, because you're in the middle of the city. You're in the middle of the city, but you're also floating in shag. It has its own magic, in a way. Other than that, I don't have many thoughts. Do you?

[Lawrence points to Sophia and says:]

LW: You can't blame her for everything.

[All laughing.]

LW: It's easy, but you can't do it.

KDJ: Before I answer your question... The idea of this project was to talk honestly and get as much information out of you in these 24

hours, with the four of us in one room. When we make a book out if this, is that uninteresting for you to read? Why doesn't it work for you when it is too comfortable?

LW: Not that it doesn't work.

[Lawrence looks at the computer.]

LW: I don't know what you got on there. It will be a lot of work on your part, but you are supposed to be an intellectual. You are supposed to go through all the crap around it and find the three words or the three sentences. That was what I was going to suggest: that the size of the book is not the question. Somebody opens it up, they find a conversation that went on that has some meaning. I use the word *stevig* [solid], but that's dignity to me. *Stevigheid* [solidity] is a nice dignity, because it is false: you pulled yourself together to walk down the street. That's more *stevigheid* than anything else. It's not really strength, you pulled it together and gave the other people the dignity that you are doing a performance. That's important to me. As we were talking, I began to realize that personally I am very tired of reading all this stuff that's trying to humanize somebody. In fact: artists and intellectuals are not human. They are human, but they are not human in the sense that they are normal. They have to put it together in some way that it carries that nobody has to know how it happened, but the people can use it. I kept thinking in terms of performance, more than I did in terms of content. As I said, I'm not frightened of content; I basically know that all the bad thoughts I thought, I said out loud. Somewhere along the line. That's the advantage of being a public person for 40 years.

[Karlyn's phone rings. She puts it away.]

LW: You can answer.

KDJ: No, no. I have one hour and 43 minutes with you and I'm going to take them.

[All laughing.]

LW: Well, I'm going to put some clothes on. While we talk, if nobody minds. You can phrase it: it takes me three minutes to put on a pair of stockings. I am just as cold with clothes on as I am without. So, it makes absolutely no difference to me.

[All laughing.]

LW: I don't like sleeping with things on.

[Lawrence starts telling about sleeping naked being in the Arctic and his next film.]

LW: I don't have all that much to say. My work only works with a receiver. I can make beautiful things all day, but as long as they don't react with somebody, they are not functioning as art.

KDJ: What do you feel you do when you are directing? You just said that you feel like an object, but when you are directing...

LW: That's different, that's synthetic. Then everybody comes together, like we did here, and we make an accord of how we are going to function. They can argue, they can talk, everybody has the conversation. But once the red light goes on you don't lose yourself by letting somebody else be the director, somebody be the actor and another be the soundman. When the red light goes off again, they will say: "What the hell did you do that for?"

[All laughing.]

LW: But no questions during it. Because you have accepted it. In the ideal world of cinema, as it should be in the ideal world of art, you accord people roles. And one person is in charge of putting it together. There can only be one chef. But there have to be four or five

good sous-chefs. Then it's no longer a hierarchy, is it? Everybody has taken on a role. That's not what you're born into or who you are: you've taken on a role.

[Lawrence pauses.]

LW: It's nice, because if you take on the role and you fulfill it, your project roles. You get a role. And every once in a while in the last 22 1/2 hours there has been a role. Or: I think there has been. I really don't know. And we didn't have to be self-conscious about anything physical, because we were not being filmed. The video is really a terror. Film is not really such a terror because it's expensive and so complicated to get on that each thing becomes totally synthetic. With video there is the tendency that it doesn't matter because it doesn't cost anything. You all let it go. I don't like "Oh, let it go." I would really much rather prefer to put in three solid hours working on something and get it over with than when you would have this wonderful life of creativity that goes on and on and on. That's not my nature. I don't mind: there is a point and you damn well do it.

[Lawrence decides not to take a shower and just put clothes on.]

KDJ: Do you shower every day, usually?

LW: Yeah. Even: you talked about the hitchhiking, I washed. I am one of those people who has to get their head wet for some reason. And it's funny, because I don't have hair on the top of my head. It's not about that. You clean yourself off in some way. Everybody has their own little ritual.

KDJ: Since when do you have your beard?

LW: It's genetic. I don't know. A long time. I don't know why or not why, but it is. That's fine. Also I don't like that male thing

that you get up in the morning and that there is this ritual. There is no ritual, there is just a matter of occasion. That's it, it's just there. That's why people have long hair: they don't have to think about it. That is no longer part of the whole *geist* [spirit]. They don't participate in some certain gender ritual. You just get up in the morning and get clean: you just brush your teeth and you're fine, I think. We don't know why we do certain things. To make things out of it is really always rather silly.

KDJ: But you do seem to care a lot about what you look like.

LW: Doesn't everybody? But that's far more about what you put on than what you are. Except for my getting a belly now, which I really don't know what to do with.

[All laughing.]

LW: I'm 68, what can I do? That comes with choices. You can take time off from working and do the gym. But you can't do both. And being a little dissatisfied with things is not such a bad thing.

KDJ: Is dissatisfaction something that keeps you going?

LW: Again there is this thing between aspire and desire. I really don't know. The more I get to the point where I am supposed to have a distance, the less distance I seem to have. So that's an interesting thing. They say: "Well, you're looking at an artist." And they have been a public person for 30 years, that's a long time. And they are upset about sometimes being objectified, because they are a person too. And nobody takes it into consideration but they have feelings too, or fears or anxieties. And yet, instead of wisdom, what you get the more you work in the world is more and more lack of distance rather than distance. The distance in your mind is more and more read as cynicism. I think nobody really wants to inten-

tionally become cynical. They become cynical and that's the one thing you have to be very, very careful of. That, on a personal level, is the major danger of being a lucky artist. That you can function in the world is that you have a tendency, just because you're tired, to let yourself become cynical. That you have to fight against. Unless you are a good person and I guess I am not a good person. I'm just as tempted by all the things that make life a little bit easier. You really have to: "Hey, hey." Maybe you can do that better than anybody in the whole world, but what do you pay? What do you get upset about? Just do it, it'll be fine. The minute that happens, once or twice, I watched people I had great respect for that I've lost interest in, it's true. You get the feeling that you are able to do something that somebody else has not yet shown that they can do. It's not an answer; it still has to be exactly how it is supposed to be, or else you really fuck yourself and you fuck the whole world over. You have not fulfilled your responsibility. I much rather make a bad work, than a cynical work. And I have made bad works, and that later "Oh my God." I've changed them in the works book, the Green book. You notice, I show where the changes occur over time, because after the 70s it was no longer necessary to say: "In relation to." The relation became another sculptural gesture. But I used to show people the relation, the context that they are having put it into its place. It was an attempt to communicate. But it has entered the culture. The few people who don't accept that it has entered the culture, and not know that they have the right to reject it, you can't worry about them all the time.

KDJ: So this placing, if you can call it that, became less important to you over the years?

LW: No, placing became more important. But the explanation I began to realize, putting it in the context that was taking away the

possibilities for other people. They had to put it in that context. Putting it in that context in the 70s, it had a reason. It doesn't have a reason in 2010. Anybody who doesn't know they are looking at art: that is really and truly their problem. And their fault. It's the same as people saying: "Well, that's not music." But of course it's music, you don't want to dance to it.

KDJ: Yes, that's a different story.

LW: That's a totally different story. In the 70s we used to believe that we were reaching the public that had no way to know what we have been lucky enough to find out and see and be in. Bullshit. I am more socially minded now. I basically give people the dignity and when they fuck up, they fuck up. So therefore you change your work and you change the presentation, but you don't change the essence. The essence is still that relation from human beings to objects. Now, if you will excuse me for five minutes.

KDJ: Sure, sure.

[Lawrence gets up from the table.]

LW: I also feel absolutely insane having slept in underpants.

[All laughing.]

LW: It's this social pressure.

[All laughing. Lawrence goes to his bedroom. Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia talk in Dutch about how things are going this morning. Then they start doing the dishes and pack the rest of their stuff. Lawrence comes back and signs the books Karlyn and Sarah brought. Then he starts looking for things he can give the women as a present.]

KDJ: You made about 70 artists books, didn't you?

LW: I have no idea and you know what? It's a good idea that I don't know how many I did. I believe in making books and things.

[Lawrence puts his presents on the table.]

LW: What you are getting now is not such a big deal, it's just what I've been able to find on the boat.

SG: A few weeks ago, Karlyn and I were in a bar in Venice and all of a sudden Karlyn was like: "Hey, there's a Lawrence Weiner."

LW: On the mirror.

KDJ: Exactly!

LW: That was part of my deal: I would participate if they would just let me put that thing, which we installed without any explanation. And it worked.

KDJ: We were actually just discussing this project with you and then suddenly I saw that mirror.

SG: Nobody knew, but we knew.

LW: They know it was there. That's really sufficient, isn't it? Look, as I said, I got an ego like anybody else.

[Lawrence is looking for more things. Karlyn and Sarah admire the presents they have gotten. Lawrence returns with a DVD. They talk about the film and continue to speak about relationships.]

KDJ: Lawrence, you just said that the relationship of human beings to objects was already important for you from the beginning of your career...

LW: That's pretty obvious. I always think that's the way people think. That's terribly profound. In fact, what the fuck is making a painting and putting it on the wall? It's a relation of human beings to objects.

KDJ: But you have also said that you yourself are an object.

LW: No, sometimes I feel, I'm being treated like an object.

[Lawrence gets some vitamin C.]

LW: I feel that sometimes people forget that I might have... People talk about me in the third person in front of me. And they have for the last 30 years. I find that extremely rude.

[Lawrence walks away from the table and then returns.]

LW: I feel sometimes that I am seen as an object. That gets to you sometimes.

[Lawrence takes the *Personal Structures* book.]

LW: Is this for me, by the way?

SG: Yes.

KDJ: Yes, that's for you.

[Lawrence picks up the book, flips some pages and sees the interview with Hamish Fulton. He then starts an anecdote about being with Hamish Fulton on a tour in Japan.]

LW: I have some trouble with my leg.

KDJ: You seem to be working standing, isn't that difficult with your leg?

LW: I have to move around. So, I have to have a place where I can walk. Here I go out upon the deck.

[Lawrence coughs.]

LW: Sometimes I don't go on the land for a whole two days. It's all about motion. It's all about drawing. Which is really rather interesting,

that the work is so outside of what people think it is. In fact it's really all about drawing. If you can draw it, if you can put it together, then the work falls into place. Otherwise: how is the work going to get its grace? It's then going to rely on maciage, if you don't do it that way. You can't have things rely on maciage. If you look at it from the fashion world: after a while it's going to be a little cakey. And that wasn't the point. It's a non-understanding of what goes on. You can do it from the essence correctly, then you don't have to worry about all this stuff that you have to hang on in order to make it work.

KDJ: You just said that you have the feeling you've been repeating the same thing for the past 40 years.

LW: You see, I hear it and it drives me... I want to turn off the bed. That sounds crazy.

[Lawrence walks away to the bedroom and says:]

LW: It drives me absolutely, completely bonkers.

SG: I did turn off the electric blanket.

LW: Oh, you did?

[Lawrence is in the bedroom. Karlyn asks Sarah in Dutch about her experience with the electric blanket. Lawrence returns to the table.]

LW: Well, I must say we have survived sort of well. Obviously, we have been trying to take care of each other's needs.

[Lawrence looks at the poster he has just given as a present.]

LW: I like that poster a lot. And I just happened to find some on board.

KDJ: Why do you like it so much?

LW: I love the way it works.

[Sarah points to something on the poster.]

SG: You often have these...

LW: That means something. It's a vector point. It's a vector that accepts the fact that you move from A to B. But there is something in between. You don't have to make a big fuss about it. You just have to use it as language. It's simple, but I love simple posters.

[They continue to speak about working together with other people.]

KDJ: Why does this *volgens mij* [according to me] bother you so much?

LW: I don't know why they do, but it is so fucking boring. You say: "Is that green?" *Nou, volgens mij is het een beetje groen, maar ook een beetje blauw* [Well, according to me it is a little green, but a little blue as well]. *Volgens mij*: it is or it isn't. It's actually somebody telling you that what they are saying, is the way it is. It's one of those conventions that people use, that allows them to be very pompous. It's a trick. It's like: "I don't know much about that, but..." I don't think we need all these tricks. Or maybe somebody else does, but the four of us don't need it because we all are who we are. Now I got dressed and now I'm cold.

[Sarah asks about an artwork hanging above the table. Lawrence lights a cigarette and tells about the work and anecdotes about the artist. Then the conversation returns to relationships.]

LW: Do you know what it's like, again being an object, where everywhere you go, people are asking you and they push the other person out of the way? And in fact, all you've gone out for is to buy cheese. Your life just takes over. It makes the relationship almost impossible. It makes it harder and harder and harder. Each succeeding day you get more objectified into the culture. You asked

for honesty. And it makes interpersonal relations impossible. You cannot really relate to somebody. I'm not a particularly heavy sort of person. I have my quirks about being possessive, just the same as everybody else has. But in fact, I'm not. And you cannot have any relationship with anybody, because you overwhelm them. But you don't. It's a societal thing that does. And I find that a bit difficult sometimes, quite frankly. One can't even play, because by the virtue of the society one person is in another position. And it's not a necessity. You wanted to know what one got from the 24 hours? That it's a relief for me that we were able, even though we were constantly talking about me, to deal with ourselves without having to 'ass kiss', without all that stuff. For real: everybody is who they are, and they are what they are and it's not going to change. That's the way life is. That's why maybe I am more aware of being an object. Otherwise it really doesn't bother me. But really, it makes interpersonal relationships so difficult.

KDJ: You do seem to have a lot of friends. You do seem to have good relationships with other artists, friendships that go back a long time.

LW: Yes, but they do things that interest me. Why shouldn't I? And also a lot of it is professional. It's just affectionate professional. And I don't see why professionally you cannot be affectionate.

KDJ: Do you then consider these people as friends?

LW: I don't know anything. You know, I've been in the art world for so long. It's the only world I know. That's what I was trying to explain to you: I'm not the kind of person to ask. I've been doing this since I'm 18. That's weird, that's very kinky. I mean really out there with 18. It took me a year and a half to get it out there. I don't have any other concept of the world. I don't get it. I really am the *idiot savant*. Not quotable. I don't know. You ask a strange question. I like artists.

A student is the person who's chosen the profession you've chosen. Why wouldn't you like them? Even if they are trying to knock you off the chair, so they can get on the chair or on top of the table. That's all part of the job. All that old-fashioned stuff, if you look at the rhetoric from the 70s, my positioning: it's a gunfighter, you can sit and have a drink or play poker, but if you get up, it's about who is faster, that lives. It's the job you chose. So, you can feel badly about somebody loosing it, but you can't really take responsibility for it. For it is part of the job. If you want it not to be part of the job, then you have to change the job.

KDJ: How long do you want to continue making art? Until the day you die?

LW: I don't even think it's a question, what else would I do? I could go and sit on the beach or to the Caribbean and be a famous artist and being on the beach for a couple of years. As long as that lasts. But I don't think it will be very interesting. I have a need to make art. But it is not a compulsion. It is the only way I can judge my relationship to the rest of the world. Otherwise, I don't have any sense of what my relationship to the world is. I don't know what you do in the morning, but even this morning I was lying on the bed and I was just trying to think of how to finish up what you needed and that I really didn't like the idea that even the people I am enthusiastic about,... I would appreciate it if you would just say: "I have a friend." You can change that, that's editorially allowed. I am sort of socially polite: I'm not going to say what I'm thinking, not about other people. Unless they've crossed the line. If somebody rapes someone, then I'm going to talk out loud. I really don't feel I have to be apologetic for them.

KDJ: If you say something like that, I do feel that you have a very strong ethics...

LW: Obviously, I have the same desires as other people. But I have trained myself over the years not to do it. The concept of 'concubinage' is really rather a pleasant prospect. It genuinely is. Basically, you think it. But it's like I said: you really are not supposed to eat babies. So, essentially you don't. But you're not going to run around preaching that you're not supposed to eat babies. And you're certainly not going to get any credit for doing that. It doesn't mean you haven't thought about it. Underneath this polite demeanor, there is a seething mass. You have no idea about God knows what. I am very serious. We are human beings in a society. You make your choices and you basically make them because you think they are the right choice. And you just don't do things. Some things are a no-no. That's about crossing the line. And why cross the line when basically you can *zorg voor jezelf* [take care of yourself] in a manner that's reasonable. Why cross the line? Just because you can?

KDJ: Yesterday you have mentioned three 'no's', are these the no-no's? Racism, Fascism and Sexism?

LW: That pretty much covers everything, doesn't it? Yeah, you can't have concubinage without sexism. Where you really and truly don't think, but it works. And racism is racism. Like I said, you lose your freedom with racism: you can't say that you don't like something. Why would you give up your freedom? Basically you give everybody the same dignity, when you say: "You've made the wrong choice." "Your lifestyle really sucks." That's not racism. That's just 'your lifestyle really sucks', in relation to me. I don't want it. Fascism is something else: that's organized religion, that's the state, that's people telling you that there are 'givens', and they are forever. And you are not supposed to question them. That's about heresy. That's why I did all these seminars on heresy. Where this heresy comes into the art world, it's really true: you can be a heretic. In fact, you cannot not be

heretic. If you want to be, if you aspire to be somebody, that's heresy. If you reject what they are supposing, that's heresy. It's the same thing. It's the contentions that we've been given, because of Aristotle, pro and con. It doesn't leave anything open, but we live in a world of cell phones and computers. That explains to you every day in their existence that there is a minimum for right answers. Minimum. And that's the start of the whole conversation. We live in a world where simultaneous reality is a political necessity to understand.

[Lawrence tells about his piece on the Spui in Amsterdam.]

LW: Art is supposed to do that. Art is supposed to bring these material facts, that people have these heavy, heavy beliefs. And in fact, if they would turn around they would just look at the wall. A dry-wall that has been built somewhere in the field. All of their beliefs don't make any sense. Their physical world belies their emotional and religious world. That's what art is about. That's what the whole thing is about. It's about asking a question by showing a fact. Not by asking a question. Because otherwise it's just *volgens mij*. "I had an insight. Oh, I had a realization." It's not about that. Art is about putting the stuff itself right out there. I think; *volgens mij*.

[All laughing. Then Lawrence walks away from the table to open the door to let some air in. Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia join him. Together they look out the window.]

LW: You must take into consideration that it requires being edited.

SG: If it is okay with you, we will also get back to you about the text.

LW: No, I'm sorry this was a one-night stand.

[All laughing.]

LW: I'm sorry. You must understand that. That's all it was: a one-night stand.

[They walk back to the table.]

LW: Oh heavens, of course you can get back to me. But do remember, I have no private life. Everything that comes on the email, someone will log in. If anything is genuinely private, put it in an envelope, put a stamp on it and wait the extra three days.

[All laughing.]

LW: I'm freezing.

KDJ: Would you like a blanket?

LW: Well, it won't work. I was warmer when I didn't have my clothes on yet. Once I got dressed I was colder. And I think all of our systems are a little off. Not doing your whole 10-minute number in the morning.

[Together they fantasize about what it would have been like, being in New York.]

KDJ: Have you always had your studio and your house combined, in the same building?

LW: I sort of sleep where I work. If I would have all in the studio, I would probably start living in it. It's my nature. That's not an aesthetic choice; it's not a political choice. I just like to work where I live. I like my life to be integrated. That's maybe why I rail against being objectified. Nobody realizes that my lack of the enormous need, the superstructures to work, is that I can use the daily life as if it had some dignity and just put it through, washing the dishes is all part of it. You choose not to, you choose to. But you can't make a big thing out of it. I'm always afraid of this personality thing. You didn't let the maid dust the studio, but you let children in there. Hooray. Everybody does the same thing.

[Lawrence talks about letting people and animals in the studio. He lights his cigarette and says:]

LW: What should I do with my life? Every morning I have this choice: I can do anything I want with my life. I can work anyplace, I can do anything. I don't know what to do with my life sometimes. So I end up sort of staying on board. It's a genuine thing. What do I do with my life? Tell me.

KDJ: I think you will just continue to make work.

LW: I will continue making work, so that's not the point. Anyway, otherwise I don't eat. If you build your life around what you do, rather than around who you are, that's different, isn't it? No, but if you really think that your idea of being a decent soul is that you earn your living as you go along by what you do, it doesn't much matter what you do. Even if it's working in a shop. If that's how you are living, that is what you do. That's really not the question. I was talking in a much more romantic, dramatic way. What does one do with one's life?

KDJ: I don't have an answer to that, I am trying to find out.

LW: You have social responsibilities to people. I am supposed to be a person. You only get one life.

KDJ: You have to make the most out of it.

LW: But what is the most?

KDJ: You learn along the way, I guess.

LW: That's not a good idea. You see, the art that you're finding interesting is art that somebody made a very synthetic choice. Either they wasted their time rationalizing that choice instead of making

something or they made something. That's maybe the difference between the player and the non-player. That's why all of these conferences show the lack off people's engagement really in the world. They are talking about being social, but they are spending all their time talking about being social that means in fact they are not being social. Because nobody hired them to talk about being social.

[Lawrence tells an anecdote about a panel he attended in Turin.]

LW: Who you are is who you were. That's very interesting. It's a weird one, isn't it? You make the same mistakes sometimes with people. Who you are is who you were. Maybe the only work people should discuss is the last work they show. And that's still in the past.

KDJ: Do you prefer to look at the future?

LW: I can't help but looking at the future. Like I said I don't believe in the present. I don't mean that to be funny. There is no present. You're always thinking in terms of what just preceded. I preferred to not even look, I prefer to do things and see what the reaction is. It's like mixing chemicals. That's what I prefer, personally. But it ain't going to happen.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: Not for anybody in the world. Maybe some people can carry it off. And they end up like Howard Hughes or something. I cannot even find a decent role model any longer. You know, fantasy role models. The person I always wanted to be was Ingrid Bergman. She was a good actress and she had a physical thing that I found attractive and I wouldn't mind looking like. And she was living with the person who made Open City. As a kid, that to me was success. When I told that to people they were looking as if you're totally, completely fucking crackers. But that's what a role model is, when you look at what a role model is. And you want something that

gives you all the feelings that you want to have. The person you spend your time with, counts as well.

ST: Who was your last role model?

LW: I am at a point at this particular moment, that's what I said when we started talking, I don't have one. I have some way or other to allow myself to look at the physical reality. There are some role models but I just don't fit any longer. There was a moment in time, that I could've been Ingrid Bergman. If I wanted to. That passed. I could've been this, I could've been that. That's when I realized that aspiring is all the way down. You are trying to be something that you're not. Instead of trying to get something that you want. And I don't mean the Rolex. I solved that problem in 1970. I bought my little Rolex for \$250 and had a big fight with them about the band: they didn't want me to have the watch, because my wrist was too thin. They had to change the band to a girl's band or a child's band. I don't have thick wrists. And I realized: I got my Rolex, but they are not even happy about it. I like the watch, but I don't wear it because of the pretences and all of that. So, I designed my own watch. I needed a watch.

SG: You often have this blue-color: your boots...

LW: My cigarettes are also blue. In the computer we call it Gauloises blue. But in every country the Gauloises package is of a different blue. It's a different printing process. For each country. Each language has its own color.

KDJ: Do you feel that for other people you have become a role model yourself?

LW: I have been told. And I hope they are not getting the bad part of it as well. I really do. I don't really wish anything on anybody. I'm not a

'misery loves company' person. I much rather had somebody didn't have to put up with something. I much rather have that I didn't have to put up with it. I guess so, yes. I saw that in Utrecht. I don't know why people are hanging on my words. I'd really much rather prefer to have a conversation with them. And then even showing off that I'm so smart. But it's not any fun if you're just sort of like... what are you doing? I mean: why? I know what I do to get through life as a person. I don't do as well as I would like to. And I've got all the basic equipment, why would I then want them to follow me? I would just be looking at another imperfect icon or something. The only reason for an icon is iconoclasts. It has no other function.

[All laughing.]

LW: There is no function for an icon except for iconoclasts. Without them you cannot be an iconoclast. So why would one want to be an icon? It sounds so silly and off the top like you know, super-sophisticated, but in fact there is no function of an icon except for an iconoclast. It's something to attack. Otherwise it's just an object sitting there. It doesn't carry with it anything.

[Lawrence whispers:]

LW: I don't know.

[Lawrence to Sophia:]

LW: This must have been really rather amusing for you. Three old people who cannot figure out how to have a decent orgy.

[All laughing. Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: Was it okay?

ST: It was.

LW: Your presence was absolutely necessary: there was a sense of intelligence there when the three of us were floundering around.

[All laughing.]

LW: Trying to say X by saying Y, the whole tone and tenor was this fight against the Y and yet there was no X to supersede it. It's strange, isn't it? Odd. Sorry, this is just because I'm obsessed with this XY.

KDJ: This XY is on your board now, but how long have you been thinking about it?

LW: A long time. I don't remember when. That's the problem with living in any kind of the past, except for my own. There are certain things that you never quite resolve. If you didn't resolve them and you're really thinking: "Oh Christ, look I make this show. I did this, I did that." Bring in the things you never resolved and stow them back on the table. And see what happens.

KDJ: Since when is it on your board?

LW: It's not on the board for a long time, but it has been a question for a long time. If you want to understand something, you have to be something. You have to be 1 1/2. It's the half that interests me. What is the half?

[Lawrence puffs his cigarette.]

LW: You didn't ask me your fiftieth question.

KDJ: Object.

[A long pause.]

LW: Something in the way. It's true. Something in the way.

KDJ: Do you feel that when you describe yourself as an object, that you're something in the way?

LW: I am in the way. But that's also the way I see art and mathematics and science. Whoever does something or gets something together, for the next person you are in the way. And that's all right. You have to make a decision whether you can continue to function by moving aside a little bit or whether you're going to have to stand there. And that's when you bring in all the false rationalizations morally. Of course, I would step aside a bit. But they are really awful.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: But actually it's about whether you are willing to step aside or not. That is the answer. I feel the objectification of people. Things take away certain types of things. But subjectivity is not an answer either. So, I'm trying to find that balance when I work. It's a rational balance. But you can rationalize anything after the fact. But you know, objects are in the way. It was the definition that made me realize that I am a sculptor. It's Ad Reinhardt's joke that sculptures are the things that when the lights go out, you fall over.

SG: Do you still see yourself as a sculptor?

LW: That's all I do: I make sculptures. All the rest of the stuff is all just social *angst* that you let people force you in to the fact that you have to interrelate to them and communicate and all of that. But basically, I make things that you put out in the world and people have to decide whether to climb over, go around or move out of the way. And there are people who like it where it is. I just leave it. But that doesn't mean that sometimes something else is going to supersede it. It's supposed to be. It's the natural order of things. It's one of the things why people keep working. They're trying to keep

things that fit in with the natural order of things. That you don't have to spend your entire time defending something that you have already done. That maybe it has outlived its usefulness. It all sounds very nice, but each time it's an emotional decision. Don't you find that? It relates to everybody, that thing that you choose to do.

[Lawrence lights his cigarette.]

LW: You basically have to put it into a context. That complex is whatever context you find it in. The advantage of international art is that you find your work functions in different contexts. I'm working on something for Abu Dhabi now. That's a whole other context. It's a culture I seem to understand, but I would prefer not to live in. And yet, if I am going to do something, it has to have some dignity and it has to be useful for people that you're doing it for. Without changing your inheritance belief pattern. It's been a great privilege that the work keeps finding itself in places, even though it's the last place you would expect it to be in, it functions. You don't really know how you're supposed to feel about it. You're not making it universal. But the world is catching up to everything. It just comes along and there you are.

[Lawrence chuckles.]

LW: Don't you find that exciting? It really doesn't depend upon you being who you are or what you are and it depends upon how this stuff sets in the world it finds itself in. And there has to be a point where that happens. And when it does, you're stuck with it. It just doesn't go away. It's weird.

[The four get up from the table. Lawrence shows his notes for his work for the project in Lisbon that's hanging on the wall. They return to the table.]

SG: It's 11.55 am. We are here for another 5 minutes. At the beginning we said we have our working title *MÉNAGE À QUATRE*...

LW: We have to sit together about how we are going to call this. *MÉNAGE À QUATRE* is just a joke, but it's a nice joke. It was a *MÉNAGE À QUATRE* in its own form. We'll have a name and we need to think of what it looks like. We keep in touch.

[Sarah writes down all the contact details. Karlyn starts switching off the computer.]

LW: You cannot switch that off yet! We still have another minute. For immortality! What title? We have to get the title on the record.

KDJ: I still have three sound recorders here.

LW: A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

[All laughing.]

LW: That's the title. It's a nice colloquial thing and it translates into every language. But keep thinking. Let's name the baby when we see what it looks like.

[Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia pick up their bags. The four walk up the stairs. The women put on their coats. It's twelve o'clock; Karlyn, Sarah and Sophia leave the boat. Outside, they kiss Lawrence goodbye.]



Karlyn De Jongh

Karlyn De Jongh (* 1980, Netherlands), independent curator and author. Study of Fine Arts in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, Netherlands. Received M.A. in Philosophy and M.Phil. in Art History and Theory at the Universities of Leiden, Netherlands and Santa Barbara, CA, USA. Since 2007, working with the project Personal Structures.

[Photo: Vienna, Austria, 6 May 2010, 1:56 pm.]



Sarah Gold

Sarah Gold (* 1978, Netherlands), independent curator and author. University education in Germany (Heidelberg) and received her M.A. degree in Art History from the University of Leiden, Netherlands. Worked as an assistant curator at the Caldic Collection in the Netherlands and is engaged in the project Personal Structures since 2005.

[Photo: Vienna, Austria, 6 May 2010, 2:01 pm.]

Personal Structures Art Projects # 01

LAWRENCE WEINER
SKIMMING THE WATER [MÉNAGE À QUATRE]

Personal Structures Art Projects are projects which are documented as special edition artists' books. Each project centralizes one artist and emphasises his work. All books in this series will be published by GlobalArtAffairs Foundation, the Netherlands. An excerpt of each project will additionally be published in the ongoing series *Personal Structures: Time • Space • Existence*.

As part of *Personal Structures Art Projects* will appear in 2010:

HERMANN NITSCH
ROMAN OPALKA
LEE UFAN
ON KAWARA

